THE UNCONQUERED SEMINOLE INDIANS

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The Unconquered

Seminole Indians

Pictorial History of the Seminole Indians

By Irvin M. Peithmann
SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
Author of "Echoes of the Red Man"

Established 1947

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DEDICATED TO
THE INDIANS OF NORTH AMERICA
WHO VALIANTLY FOUGHT TO KEEP
THEIR LANDS AND HUNTING GROUNDS

About the Author

Irvin M. Peithmann, a native of Southern Illinois, has spent a lifetime studying archaeological remains of pre-historic Indians in Southern Illinois. He joined the staff of Southern Illinois University in 1931, and became Curator of Archaeology at SIU Museum in 1949. Peithmann is at present Research Assistant in the Outdoor Recreation and Education Department at SIU.

His book, "Echoes of the Red Man", published in 1955 by the Exposition Press, New York, N.Y., has been widely acclaimed in the Midwest and is now being used as a reference book in the Illinois' schools.

The author has traveled over most of the United States, Cuba, Canada and Alaska gathering material for his studies of the American Indian. His writings have appeared frequently in "The Journal of the Illinois State Archaeological Society" and the journal of "The Illinois State Academy of Science".

In 1940 he received the Gold Award for outstanding research from the Illinois State Archaeological Society.

Peithmann, on leave of absence from Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, Illinois, made field trips on Seminole research deep into the Everglades from St. Petersburg, Florida, his main base of operations.

Indian Names

Before the coming of white men, Florida was a region of scenic beauty. Gradually in the past years man with his technical knowledge and mechanical tools has changed much of the natural landscape to one that is artifical. Cities and towns have replaced the tropic-like jungle scenes of less than one hundred years ago.

Today there are cities, towns, parks, lakes and rivers named after Indian tribes and chiefs. These Indian names are a part of the American story—a reminder of a vanished past.

The following is a partial list of names of Seminole-Creek and aboriginal Indian words.

NAME — MEANING

Alachua—jug
Apalachicola—people residing on the other side
Apopka—potato eating people
Apoxsee—tomorrow
Aripeka—name of an Indian chief
Bithlo—canoe
Caloosahatchee—strong black river
Chattahoochee—black rock or carved stones
Chillocahatchee—horse creek
Chipola—feast or dance place
Chittahatchee—snake river
Chokoloskee—old house
Coacoochee—wildcat—Indian chief
Contoohattchee—river of coonti-flower
Ecofina—earth or natural bridge
Fenholloway—high footlog
Halpatiokee—alligator river
Hialeah—pretty prairie
Hicpochee—little prairie lake
Hilolo—long-billed curlew
Holopaw—place where something is hauled
Homosassa—place where wild pepper grows
Hypoluxo—round mound
Iamonia—mild, peaceable
Immokalee—tumbling water
Istachatta—red man
Istokpoga—lake where a person was killed in the water
Itchepuckesassa—tobacco field
Itchetucknee—blistered tobacco
Kissimmee—corruption of Tissimmee, an early Indian tribe
Lacoochee—shortened from Withlacoochee
Loxahatchee—turtle river
Mattlacha pass—warrior's assistant
Miami—very large or great water
Micanopy—head or topmost chief
Micco—chief
Miccosukee—chiefs of the hog clan
Myakka, Miakka, Mayaca—variants of Miami, very large
Narcoossee—little bear
Nocatee—what is it?

NAME — MEANING

Ocheesee—hickory leaf
Ocoee—apricot or vine place
Ochlockonee—yellow water
Ojus—to have, or plentiful
Okahumpka—lonely, or bitter water
Okaloosa—black water
Okeechobee—big water
Okefenokee swamp—shaking water
Oklawaha—bad crossing, or crooked river
Olustee—blackish
Opa Locka—big swamp
Osceola—famous Indian leader
Pahokee—grass water
Palatka—A crossing or ferry
Panasoffkee—deep valley
Pensacola—hair people
Pithlachascotee—river where canoes are made
Sopchoppy—red oak
Seminole—wild, non-domesticated, the Seminole Indians
Steinhatchee—man's river
Suwannee—river of reeds
Tallahassee—old town
Tampa—near it
Thonotosassa—place of many flints
Tohopekaliga—fort
Tomoka (Timucua)—name of early Indian tribe
Tsala Apopka—place where trout are eaten
Umatilla—water rippling over sand
Wacasassa—cattle range
Wakulla—corrupted form of Guacara early Florida Indian tribe
Wauchula—sandhill crane
Weekiwachee—little spring
Welaka—tide or intermittent spring
Weohyakapka—walking on water
Wetumpka—sounding or tumbling water
Wewahitchka—water view
Wimico—chief water
Withlacoochee—little great water
Wyomehatchee—whiskey creek
Yahala—orange
Yeehaw—wolf

Foreword

One day in February, 1954, I found myself looking at my first Seminole Indian village near the Tamiami Trail in the Everglades of southern Florida. Since I had studied and written about the Indians who had lived in the Midwest, my thoughts turned to the Seminoles and their past.

I returned to the Everglades in December, 1955, to study these people and their way of life. I found these Indians, their culture almost unspoiled by our civilization, still living in much the same manner as their ancestors over a century ago. The Seminoles are the only Indians east of the Mississippi River whose culture and traditions have been preserved to the present day.

Research into their past took me to libraries and to long forgotten records that have been buried in the archives of history. The story I began to piece together was a sad account of a people who have suffered much.

As Americans we should know the story of how the ancestors of the Seminoles were driven into the Everglades over one hundred years ago, a story of historic resistance against the white man and his power. The story of the Seminoles is an epic in American-Indian history—a chapter in Florida history that is closed.

The author is indebted to William McKinley Osceola, Miami, Florida; Deaconess Harriet Bedell of the Glade Cross Episcopal Mission, Everglades, Florida; Charlie Cypress and family of the Big Cypress Reservation, La Belle, Florida; Robert L. Greenlee, Daytona Beach, Florida; Ross Allen, Oliver Allen, and Wilfred T. Neil of Ross Allen's Reptile Institute, Silver Springs, Florida, and Bob Becker, *Chicago Tribune,* Chicago, Illinois, for their help and kind permission to use some of their photographs in this book. To Erland Larson of The Great Outdoors Association, St. Petersburg, Florida, for the map and color design used on the cover.

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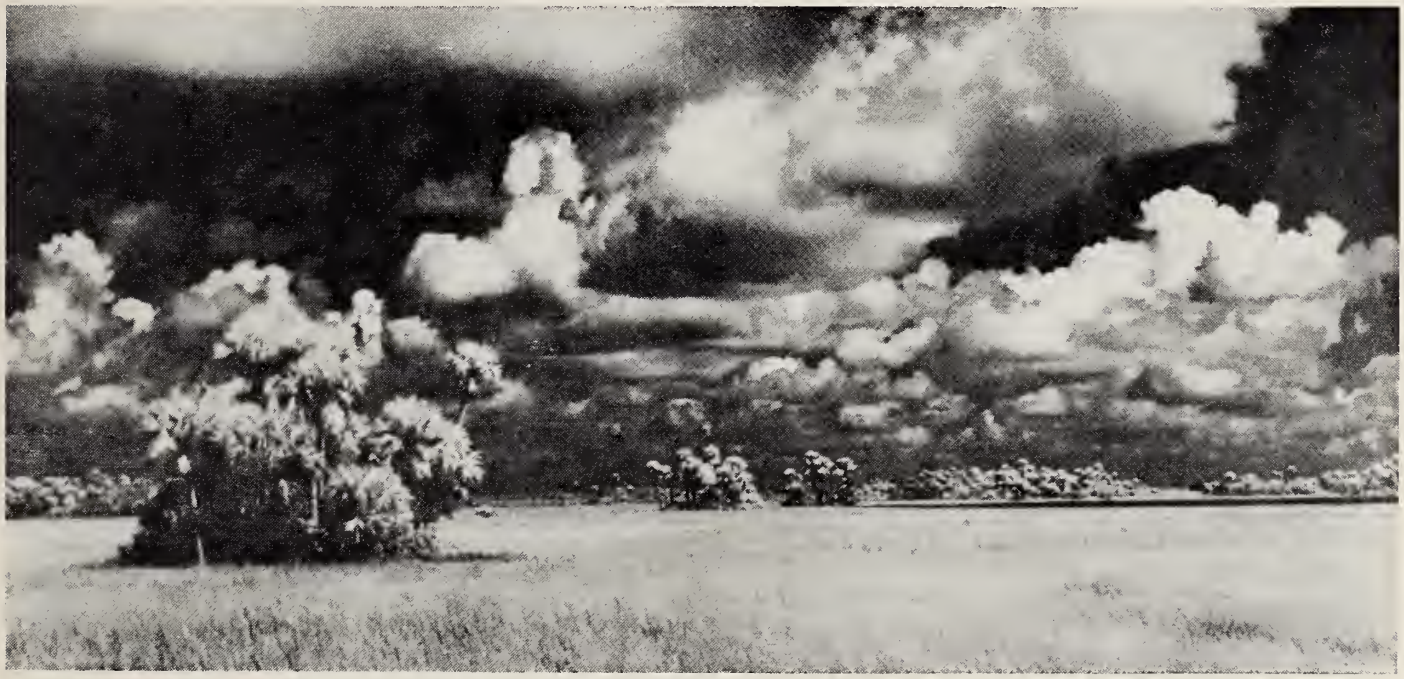
The author wishes also to acknowledge his debt to his wife, Leona Ruth whose patience and forebearance during its progress helped lighten the labor of writing; to his sons, Albert and Russell, who shared his interest in this book; and to his parents, Edward H. and Sarah J. Peithmann, Hoyleton, Illinois, for their interest in this undertaking.

Map of Florida

Unconquered Seminoles

PART ONE

THE EVERGLADES



This broad expanse of shallow water, saw grass, and islands of palm-covered hammocks, stretches for miles along the Tamiami Trail. This seemingly endless sea of grass is called by the Seminole Indians, Pa-hay-okee, meaning "grassy waters".

In the southeastern part of the United States on the lower peninsula of Florida is a region known as the Everglades. This vast area of swampland and water stretches from near the Atlantic Ocean on the east to the Gulf of Mexico on the west and from Lake Okeechobee to the Florida Keys on the south.

The easiest way to visit this region is to take the Tamiami Trail, a modern highway through the Everglades swamp country. The trail gets its name from two cities in Florida, Tampa and Miami. It connects Tampa on the west coast with Miami on the east coast.

Until this trail was opened to modern traffic in the middle twenties, travel to and from towns along both coasts was by steamboats plying the coastal waterways. This outside passage was the only means of reaching isolated communities and towns along the Gulf Coast.

The Everglades country is considered subtropical because of its geographical location, but to those who are accustomed to seasonal changes, it seems tropical indeed.

Visitors to the Everglades see tropical plants growing in abundance in a seemingly strange land of moss-covered trees, climbing vines, wild orchids, and dense jungle growth. In parts of this swampland, epiphytes (air plants), growing in profusion on the cypress trees, remind a midwesterner of the mistletoe on the sycamore and elm trees in the lower Ohio Valley. Along the west coast of southern Florida to Cape Sable, the mangrove forests with their

The Pa-Hay-Okee

twisted grotesque roots rise from the water to meet the green jungle mass above.

Bird-watchers find this region a paradise in which to study native and migrant birds and animal life in a natural environment. The anhingas with their spearlike beaks are at home in the water as well as in the air. Other aquatic birds such as the snowy egret, white heron, little blue heron, the great blue heron, pelican, purple gallinule, cormorant, and the wood ibis inhabit the area and may be seen feeding in the marshes or roosting among the cypress and mangrove trees. The rare roseate spoonbill is sometimes observed feeding with flocks of snowy egrets and other water birds. The mallard and coot and other species of ducks are found in abundance. Although the wild turkey is also a numerous species, it is a bird which is seldom observed. The scavenger turkey buzzard can be seen flying or roosting on the trees. Birds of prey in this area are the bald eagle, osprey, and hawks of several varieties. This swampy region was once the habitat of the graceful flamingo which is now generally seen only in parks and in other commercial attractions in Florida. Many of the beautiful birds seen in the Everglades almost became extinct years ago because of the great demand for their feathers.

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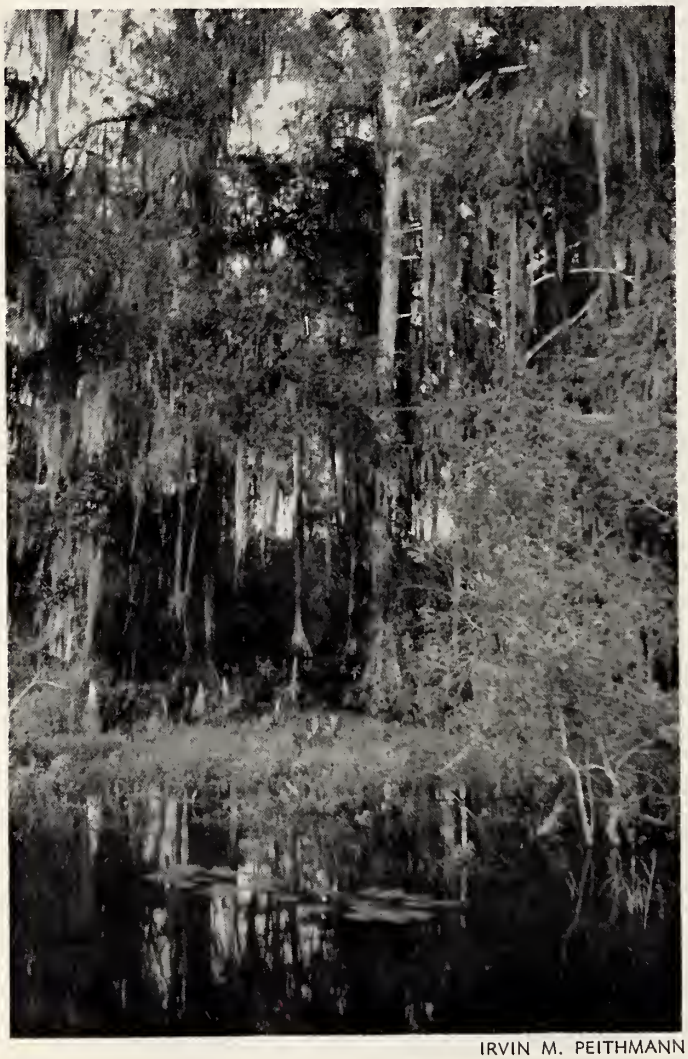
Wild orchid airplants (epiphytes) cling to the branches of cypress trees, (dark areas in trees.)



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Dense jungle growth is a sanctuary for wildlife in the area. This region is infested with poisonous snakes.

The alligator inhabits the Everglades, but the crocodile is found only along the coastal waterways in the inlets and estuaries of the Ten Thousand Islands. Alligators prefer fresh water, while the crocodiles live in or near salt water. The poisonous cottonmouth moccasin, the diamond-back rattlesnake, and the deadly coral snake are common in the Everglades.

The *Everglades is not all a thick swamp of trees covered with moss and climbing vines, as commonly believed. Much of the area is an open, raw grass marsh lying in clear, shallow water which flows slowly from Lake Okeechobee to the Gulf of Mexico. (The lake, covering about 700 square miles, is the second largest fresh water lake lying wholly in the United States).

Flowing southward from this lake is a great, shallow natural fresh water drainage way which is usually called the River of Grass. It extends in a broad sweep over one hundred miles long and fifty to seventy miles wide.

This large drainage way swings in a wide arc from the Tamiami Trail southwesterly to Whitewater Bay and Florida Bay. To the Indian, this apparently endless sea of shoulder-high grass was called Pa-hay-okee, meaning "grassy waters." In winter, the dry season in the Everglades, the water is only a few inches deep.

*The present name Everglades come into use after the purchase of Florida from Spain by the United States. The name Everglades appeared on the first map in 1823. The word glade is of old English origin; that is, it comes from the Anglo-Saxon "gloed" meaning "shining" or "bright". In the Scandinavian language, it referred to "a clear place in the sky, a bright streak or patch of light." For over a thousand years the word "gloed", or "glade" in the English language meant an open grassy place in the forest. The "glades" in southern Florida are the only Everglades in the world

The Swampland

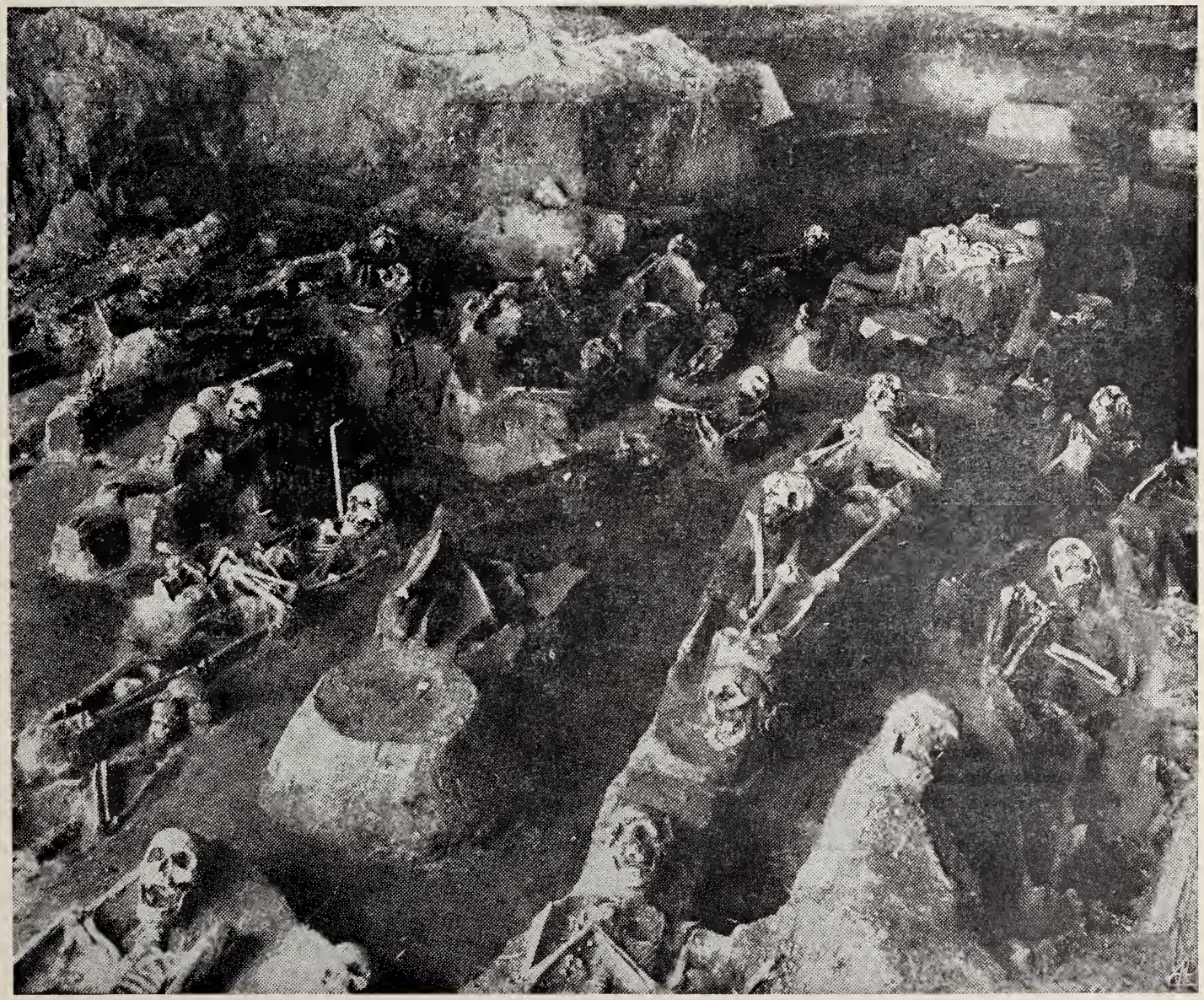
Intensive efforts have been made to reclaim this vast swampland. Many canals radiating from Lake Okeechobee to both coasts have not lowered the water in this large lake to a great extent, nor have they affected in any amount, the water in the Everglades to the south of this lake.

In the Everglades north of the Tamiami Trail, the Big Cypress Swamp, embracing 4,000 square miles, is America's largest swamp. It covers a greater area than the Dismal Swamp in Virginia and North Carolina, and the Okefenokee Swamp of Georgia and Northern Florida, combined.

In the pine woods and the open glades and on higher ground along the mangrove coast are islands of jungle growth called hammocks (pronounced hummock). The name, meaning "Garden Place", is probably of Indian origin.

The Seminoles and earlier Indians planted their crops in the rich loamy soil of these elevations. On these hammocks there is still found the nearest approach to tropical growth in the United States. One of the finest hammocks in existence is known as Paradise Key, for many years protected by the Florida Federation of Women's Clubs and then known as Royal Palm State Park. Many of these hammocks have been ruined by fire and plant collectors, but in the Everglades National Park the tropical growths are again coming back to their original lushness. The Everglades National Park in Southern Florida is one of the nation's newest national parks. It consists of approximately 1,258,000 acres of which nearly 475,000 acres are submerged lands, the largest subtropical wilderness in the United States.

It was to this setting that the Seminole Indians



This Indian burial ground near St. Augustine was excavated in 1936 by the owner of the Fountain of Youth Park. The early aboriginal tribes interred their dead in large burial mounds near the village. Usually personal belongings were placed in the grave.

Ponce de Leon Lands

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An ancient burial mound on the site of an old Indian village, near Boca Ciega Bay, Pinellas County.

fled and sought refuge from their oppressors, the white man, who failed after two wars and subsequent uprisings of the red man to remove all of them forcibly to reservations in Indian territory.

Columbus has been given the credit for discovering America. This vast land was in reality discovered and explored by men of several different nationalities—the Spanish, Portuguese, French, and English explorers learned something new about America by probing in random places along its shoreline. They came not knowing what they would find; yet, after each voyage, they returned with more knowledge and new ideas about the geography of this land. Many of these early discoveries and epic voyages during the sixteenth century were along the coasts of present day Florida.

The natives that the European adventurers found might well have been called something other than Indians, if the discovery of America had been made at a later date and under other circumstances. Columbus gave them this name because he thought he had reached the East Indies. The conquerors who came later termed them savages because they chose to fight back and stood in the way of conquest. In some respects, however, the culture or way of life of these so-called "savages" was not as advanced as the discoverers, but it was distinctly their own.

At first the Europeans had little interest in the Indians except to use them to advantage. The conquerors were confident of their own superiority and to them civilization meant their civilization. Since the Indians were far behind the Europeans in technical skills the invaders concluded that the Indians were backward and uncivilized. Therefore, moral principles were forgotten in the treatment of the Indians. Thus, the white man took what he wanted ruthlessly, without regard for the rights of the red man.

After the almost total destruction of the aboriginal tribes of Florida, the Seminoles, who came later, found themselves at the "cross roads" of their destiny early in the nineteenth century. White men came and demanded their lands, but the Seminoles fought to keep them. The few who remained after their wars with the white men retreated deep into the Everglades.

FROM AN OLD PRINT

The ancient Florida Indians were farmers. The women planted their crops in the rich loamy soil that produced abundantly.

Archaeologists have found evidence that prehistoric Indians lived on the Florida peninsula centuries before the coming of white men. These Indians left many shell mounds and former village sites along the coasts and inland lakes and waterways of present-day Florida.

The Spaniards landed on the east coast of the peninsula on April 2, 1513, and called the land 'La Florida' in honor of the "Easter Festival". Their leader, Ponce de Leon, was searching for gold and

FROM AN OLD PRINT

Ancient Indian warriors dressed in war costumes. Armed with bow and arrow, war club and spear they march to attack the enemy.

Indian Migrations

the "Fountain of Youth". At that time the aboriginal Indian population was about 10,000, divided into four major and about 50 subordinate tribes. The major tribes were named Calusa, Tekesta, Timucua and Apalachee,

The Calusa in the southwest along the Gulf Coast were mariners and fishermen who sailed their dugout canoes as far as Cuba. The oyster and shell fish beds along the coast furnished an abundant supply of food.

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

Among the ancient Florida Indians, the marriage of a Timucua Chieftain was concluded by bringing in the wife on a litter.

No Spanish colony was established in the region where they lived because the fierce Calusa consistently repelled the Spanish invaders. As a matter of fact, one of the Spanish leaders, Ponce de Leon, died of a wound inflicted by a Calusa arrow.

Hernando de Soto and his soldiers, who landed at Tampa Bay on the west coast in 1539, were immediately attacked by the powerful Calusas. These fearless Indians took on all invaders. They fought in turn the Spanish, the French, and the English as the territory changed hands. However, because of their warlike nature and the diseases contracted from white men, they were in time reduced to only a few small groups, but even with their limited numbers they continued to resist invasions.

The largest and most numerous of the aboriginal Indians were the Timucua and Tekesta, then living along the east Florida coast. They were farmers and fishermen. Their language was understood by other tribes in Florida because of its simplicity. The Tekesta lived on the lower east coast and were almost as warlike and cruel as the Calusa. While professing friendship, they were liable to murder shipwrecked sailors.

In northwest Florida lived the Apalachee, a large tribe that De Soto found in the year 1539 while on his ill-fated northward march to explore the new found land. He and his men spent a winter with them.

The Apalachee Indians of Muskhogean ancestry lived in the area of the present city of Tallahassee in the red clay hill country near the Apalachicola and Ochlocknee Rivers. They were a powerful nation and their culture was farther advanced than that of other aboriginal Florida Indians encountered by the first white men. Early Spanish chronicles and records tell of their pride and bravery.

The Apalachee Indians were farmers, but they were also rated as good warriors and fighters. After their first conflict with the Spaniards, they invited Spanish missionaries to come and live among them.

By 1704, however, the Apalachees were doomed to extinction. A small British army under Governor Moore of Carolina, aided by 1,000 Indian allies, destroyed their towns and laid waste their crops. Approximately 1,500 survivors were taken back to Carolina as slaves. The scattered remaining Apalachee were attacked again a year later and were almost wiped out completely.

The Indians later known as the Creeks lived in the southern Appalachian region, (now Georgia and Alabama) and they, too, were first met by De Soto in 1539. They were an agricultural people, growing corn, beans, squash, and tobacco, but depended on hunting and fishing for part of their livelihood. As the Europeans began to settle along the Atlantic coast, these Indians started trading with the English, Spanish, and French. They learned to sow and plant European grains and vegetables and to raise horses, cattle, hogs, and domesticated fowls.

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A strand of vari-colored glass beads. The Seminole women have worn many strands of colored glass beads for generations.

Attempts were made to enslave these proud Indians, but the colonists eventually had to depend upon more docile slaves from Africa to do the hard manual labor in the forests and on the farms.

In the early part of the eighteenth century a group of Creek Indians known as the Hitchiti-speaking *Oconee* tribe left their ancestral home in Georgia for some unknown reason, and began an intermittent

Aid British

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

Micanopy was head chief at the time of the Seminole Wars and later in the new territory. (From McKenney and Hall.)

southward migration. About 1750, they moved into Florida and settled on the Alachua (Ah-lah-chuay) Prairie not far from the present city of Gainesville. They consisted of Muskogee, (Creek) and Hitchiti Mikasuki and refugee Yamasee, Yuchi and remnants of other conquered tribes from the north.

Some years earlier, about 1705, a group of Mikasuki had moved south to Apalachee, but they later merged with Georgia (Creek) tribes who came south in the mid-century. After 1750, the warlike Mikasukis enslaved the Yamasees. Still later, another group of Georgia Creeks called Muskogees entered Florida, and about 1775 the Muskogee began to be known as the Seminoles.

The nucleus of the Seminole Nation in Spanish Florida were principally Hitchiti or non-Muskhogean. They were Indians who detached themselves from the Creek Confederacy partly because they were hunters and cared little about agriculture as a means of livelihood. These Indians spoke the Hitchiti tongue, a language that bore no resemblance to that of the Muskhogean Creeks. Out of this branch there emerged the most important element among the Seminoles—the resolute—determined—and vindictive Mikasuki Indians.

Seminole (pronounced Sem-in-o-li by the Indians) means wild, non-domesticated in either the Mikasuki or Muskogee language. Other early historical accounts refer to them as 'separatists' or 'runaways', names given to a part of the Creek tribes who migrated south into what is now Florida to form the main tribes of the Seminole nation. Their descendants are the only Indians still living in Florida. Except for a group of Choctaws, numbering less than 200.

By the time Creek migrations into Florida had begun, the Timucua, Calusa, and the Apalachee had been almost destroyed by warfare and diseases of the white man. The few remaining Indians of Florida were small dispersed bands. Some retreated southward to the Everglades swamps and the islands of the Florida Keys. Other aboriginals were soon absorbed into the Seminole population.

Pressures of white colonization in the north, in Alabama and Georgia caused other Indian tribal groups speaking a language called Hitchiti to follow the earlier Creek Indians into Florida. Sometime later, the Eufaula from Alabama joined the Seminoles. They spoke a language called Muskogee. At the turn of the nineteenth century, shortly after the Creek War of 1813-14, refugees of many tribes from farther north in Alabama and Georgia came to live with the Seminoles. They, too, spoke the Muskogee tongue.

From these many alliances came the present day Seminoles, a heterogeneous blending of Indian tribal groups. It would be improper, therefore, to call the Seminoles a tribe; they are actually a mixture of many tribes, and even of different races.

Many years before the American Revolutionary War, Negro slaves of both the whites and the Creek and Cherokee Indians of South Carolina, Georgia,

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

Beaded leather moccasins fashioned many years ago. All the clothing was made by the women of the tribe.

and Alabama began fleeing south to seek asylum in Florida. Unmolested, generations of their descendants cultivated the soil and raised herds of cattle. These Negroes, too, united with the Seminoles. Though they became Spanish subjects and enjoyed complete freedom among the Seminoles, their formal status was that of vassals. Their obligations were satisfied, however, with yearly token payments of corn, stock, and deerskin to the Indians.

U. S. Invades

SEMINOLE AND CREEK INDIANS AID BRITISH

In 1763, Spain lost Florida to England, and it remained in English hands until 1783, following the Revolutionary War. During these twenty years, relations between the English and the Seminoles were reciprocal. They associated together freely, and no conflicts developed during the entire period of English rule.

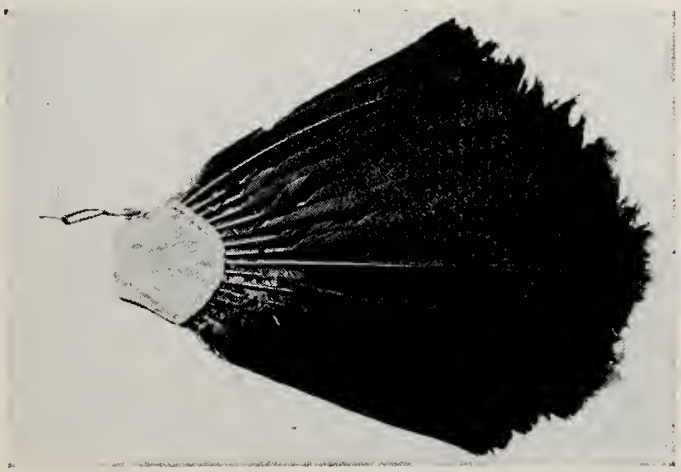
Among the ardent supporters of the British was the Muskogee Seminole Chief, Secoffee, son of the great leader of the Creek nation, Emperor Brims. (Secoffee is generally thought to be the Indian chief whom the whites called "Cowkeeper" because of his large cattle herds.)

BRITISH PARTISANS

Hard pressed by the colonists during the latter part of the Revolutionary War, the British called on the Georgia Creeks and the Florida Seminoles for assistance. Secoffee and several other Creek Chiefs received silver crowns for raids that their warriors made against the frontier settlements in Georgia and South Carolina.

When the British withdrew from the colonies in 1783, Florida again became a Spanish possession. For several decades thereafter, the Seminoles lived peacefully in this territory south of the Georgia border, but the colonists never forgot the help the Indians gave the British.

Bitterness grew during the ensuing years and clashes between whites and Indians occurred with increasing frequency along the Georgia-Florida border. The whites were particularly incensed because the Seminoles were offering sanctuary to Negro slaves escaping from Southern plantations. When the slave owners attempted to take back the fugitives, the Indians and Spaniards treated them as "stealers of human flesh" and foreign invaders. Nevertheless, efforts to recapture the Negroes were intensified after 1808 when federal law prohibited further importation of slaves into the U. S. from Africa.



SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

A fine example of Indian art is this fan made of turkey feathers.

Full scale retaliation by the Americans started with the War of 1812 when the United States government broke all precedent by sending an army into Seminole country. The Americans were fearful the British might occupy the Spanish territory as a base of operations.

Colonel Daniel Newnan led a small contingent of volunteer soldiers against the Seminoles in October, 1812, but he underestimated the strength of his adversaries. Chief King Payne, leader of the Seminoles since the death of his uncle, Chief Secoffee, in 1785, was killed in the conflict, but the soldiers were forced to retreat. They reached a camp on the St. John's River after an arduous journey of many days.

Chief King Payne was succeeded by his younger brother, Sint-Chakkee, who was also called the Pond Governor by the whites. He became famous in history as "Mikonopi" or "Micanopy," meaning "topmost King".

In February, 1813, 400 mounted cavalry from Tennessee, led by renegade Creek Indian guides, joined other army units and marched under direct government order to "chastise the Indians, plunder and burn their homes, destroy their crops and confiscate their cattle."

Almost 400 Indian villages or family units were burned; in addition, 300 horses, 400 head of cattle, and thousands of deerskins were taken. The Seminoles were routed and scattered. So successful was this operation that their fighting spirit was temporarily crushed.

CREEK WAR 1813-14

The same year, 1813, the Creek nation made a bid to stop further threats to homes and hunting grounds by organizing an army of their own under the half-breed Creek Chief William Weatherford, known as "Red Eagle". On August 30, he led 1,000 warriors on Fort Mims, a few miles north of Mobile (Alabama). The fort was taken by surprise, and every person in it was killed. This Creek uprising has been called the "Red Stick War."

The outraged American government sent General Andrew Jackson with an army from Tennessee, and his forces battled the Creeks wherever he could find them in the southeast.

BATTLE OF HORSE SHOE BEND

After a hard-fought campaign, General Jackson met the major force of the Creeks at Tohopeka (Horse Shoe Bend) on the Tallapoosa River in Alabama, May 27, 1814. His victory in this battle completely broke the power of the Creeks as a nation. Many of them went to Pensacola to the British; others moved into the interior of Florida.

To prevent further bloodshed, Chief Weatherford gave himself up. The speech he made when he surrendered to General Jackson is a famous example of Indian eloquence:

I am in your power; do with me as you please. I am a soldier, I have done the white people all the harm I could. I have fought them, and fought them bravely. If I had an army, I would yet fight, and

Fort Destroyed

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

Creek Billy (Lah-shee, the licker), a half-breed Seminole warrior. (From a portrait by Catlin in 1848).

contend to the last. But I am done—my people are all gone—I can do no more than weep over the misfortunes of my nation. Once I could animate my warriors to battle but I cannot animate the dead. My warriors can no longer hear my voice—their bones are at Talladega, Tallaschatchee, Emuckfaw, and Tohopeka. I have not surrendered myself thoughtlessly. Whilst there were chances of success, I never left my post, nor supplicated peace. But my people are gone, and now I ask it for my nation, and for myself. On the miseries and misfortunes brought upon my country, I look back with the deepest sorrow, and wish to avert still greater calamities. If I had been left to contend with the Georgian army (militia of Georgia), I would have raised my corn on one bank of the river, and have fought them on the other. But your people have destroyed my nation. You are a brave man. I rely on your generosity. You will exact no terms of a conquered people, but such as they should accede to, whatever they may be, it would now be madness and folly to oppose them. If they are opposed, you shall find me among the sternest enforcers of obedience. Those who would still hold out, can be influenced only by a mean spirit of revenge; and this, they must not, and shall not, sacrifice the last remnant of their country.

General Jackson was so impressed by the Chief's promise to keep the peace that he freed him and let him return to his people.

The Seminoles took little or no part in the Creek War although they had been urged to do so by Tecumseh, the famous Shawnee chief. A few years before the war, in 1811, he had come south from Vincennes on the Wabash River to form a coalition, or confederacy, with the southern tribes to combat the continual encroachment of the whites on Indian lands.

According to legend, Tecumseh became infuriated over the failure to get all of these southern tribes to join him. He told the assembled chiefs that when he returned to Post Detroit, he would stomp his feet and their houses would fall to the ground. In December, sometime after Tecumseh had left, the Great New Madrid earthquake crumbled many Indian houses.

On July 24, 1816, Federal forces under Colonel Clinch and Captain Loomis attacked by land and water the Negro-Seminole stronghold of Fort Apalachicola at Prospect Bluff, also known as "Negro Fort". General Jackson's orders were to "Blow it up! Return the Negroes to their rightful owners."

The attack lasted four days and ended when a hot cannon ball exploded the powder magazine, killing

ROSS ALLEN'S REPTILE INSTITUTE

The Seminole Chief John Hicks (Tokos Emathla). Depicting the costumes worn about the year 1835.

Jackson Commands

all but 60 of the 334 occupants of the fort, many of them women and children. Only three of the defenders escaped injury in the explosion, and two of these were executed on direct order from General Jackson. They were a Choctaw chief and the Negro commander, Garcia.

Though United States troops soon withdrew to their own territory lest they over-antagonize the Spaniards, the invasion was only the beginning of a long series of incidents of bloodshed in the history of the Florida Seminoles, who with their Negro allies, resisted submission and bondage.

During the wars with the Indians, the United States practiced a scorched earth policy of destruction. In the long history of man's inhumanity to man, racial conflict of this type has produced some of the most horrible examples of brutality.

When the Indians went to war and killed, it was always referred to as a massacre; however, when the white men burned whole Indian towns and killed the inhabitants, it was generally always justified as military strategy.

There can be no doubt that the feeling of bitterness between the whites and the Seminoles was equally strong on both sides. Indian families were captured and sent into slavery; cattle belonging to the Indians were stolen and driven over the border into

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

An old beaded ceremonial belt, made and used by the Florida Seminole Indians.

Georgia. Meanwhile, vengeful British traders and adventurers armed the Indians and encouraged them to attack the plantation owners of Alabama and Georgia who were extending their land holdings into Florida Territory.

In 1817, the United States government acceded to persistent demands from the Southerners and again undertook to return fugitive slaves from Florida. Late in that year, they met resistance from Neamathla, a chief of a Seminole village in southwestern Georgia, who forbade American forces to trespass

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

The many silver coins worn on the blouse show that this woman is looking for a husband. (Painted by Catlin, 1840.)

on his hunting grounds. Two hundred and fifty soldiers marched on the village, and after a struggle, Neamathla and his people abandoned their town.

The Seminoles were inflamed by this act, and nine days later they attacked a boatload of United States soldiers under command of Lieutenant Scott. On board the boat on the Apalachicola River were forty men, seven women and four children, most of whom were killed. The Seminoles also raided and looted a trading post near the mouth of the Apalachicola River before withdrawing.

To meet these new uprisings, General Andrew Jackson was placed in command of the American force of approximately 3,000 men, half of whom were Creek Indians led by a half-breed chief, William McIntosh*.

In 1818, Jackson's forces were attacked by the Indians as they forded Lake Miccosukee. The soldiers beat off the assault and reached a village on the west shore, where they found 50 white scalps hanging from poles and a number of cattle presumably stolen from Georgia settlers. The Indian town was burned, and a detachment was sent under the half-breed leader McIntosh, to pursue the fleeing Seminoles. In order to subdue the Indians, the invaders killed or captured as many natives as possible and burned their towns,

McIntosh later signed a treaty with the whites and violated tribal law by surrendering the lands of his people. For this act he was executed.

including a large Seminole village called Suwannee (Old Town) near the Suwannee River. Several thousand head of cattle and a number of horses and hogs were driven off by the expedition. In May, 1818, the Seminoles gave up the struggle.

Many Creeks and Seminoles began moving farther south in Florida. Among these refugees was a Creek woman and her son, Osceola*, who was to become the greatest of the Seminole warriors.

Before the American troops withdrew, they even attacked several Spanish settlements. When Spain protested, the United States government countered with an offer to buy the entire Florida territory. An agreement was signed on February 22,1819, by which Spain agreed to give up her holdings for five million dollars.

Note likeness of Osceola on cover as sketched by Larson.

Weapons Used Against the Seminole Indians

During the latter part of the Seminole resistance, every conceivable weapon and device was used by the military forces to round up and annihilate the remaining Indians hiding in the Everglades of south Florida. When bribery, trickery and other attempts failed to get them to surrender, other means were employed to speed up their extermination. Bloodhounds were used without success and rewards of $200 were offered for each dead Indian. Betrayed many times by the whites, these few remaining fugitives hiding in the deep recesses of the swampland took to guerilla warfare; hating the sight of white men, they harrassed their bitter enemy whenever the opportunity arose.

About this time Sam Colt, inventor of the Colt pistol, appeared in Florida with his revolutionary new firearm that would shoot five times without reloading. Colt had installed his newly patented cylinder in rifles he was manufacturing, but army officials considered his new rifle to be not only impractical but useless as an army weapon. Undaunted, Colt took his guns to Fort Jupiter and contacted Colonel William S. Harney of the 2nd regiment of U. S. Dragoons (mounted troops). The Colonel, having his troubles skirmishing with the hit-and-run Seminole warriors, was interested. Sam Colt demonstrated the fire-power of his new rifle by firing it 15 times in 31 seconds, using extra loaded cylinders that could be rapidly interchanged (similar to the magazines used in modern day automatic arms). Colonel Harney was so impressed that the army bought 50 rifles at $125 each. The Colonel, with fifty picked men armed with Colt rifles, went into the swamps and routed Chief Aripeka (Sam Jones) and his warriors. The Indians waited until the first volley had been fired by the soldiers, then charged in their usual manner only to be decimated by a fusillade of bullets from this new rifle. The Indians quickly learned to respect this new weapon, appropriately calling it *Big Medicine.*

Later, while Colonel Harney was establishing a trading post near the Caloosahatchee River, the Indians attacked during the night. The Colonel and most of his men escaped with their lives, but 30 Colt rifles fell into the hands of Indian warriors. A year and a half later the Colonel and his soldiers tracked down the Indian war leader Che-ki-ka, killed him and recovered 14 of the rifles taken in the Caloosahatchee raid.

Before the conclusion of hostilities nearly every regiment of the Regular Army took part in the Florida Indian war. Fifty thousand troops, militia, sailors, marines, and imported Indians fought the determined Seminole warriors.

To subjugate the Florida Seminoles, it cost the United States Government approximately one life and $10,000 for every Seminole man, woman and child, killed or moved to the new territory.

Unconquered Seminoles

PART TWO

SPANISH RULE ENDS

IRVIN M. PEITHMANN

A typical palm-covered hammock (hummock), meaning "Garden Place". The earlier Indians and later, the Seminoles, cleared the jungle growth, built their homes and planted their crops in the rich loamy soil. These high, dry islands in the water-covered swampland of the Everglades vary in size. Many cover a small area, others are ridges many miles in length.

The actual exchange of Florida did not take place until February 22, 1821. Upon completion of the compromise, General Andrew Jackson was appointed military governor of Florida territory.

His prejudice against Indians in general was well-known to the Seminoles. United States troops had driven most of the tribes out of southeastern states, particularly those of South Carolina and Georgia; and Jackson recommended that the same policy of enforced emigration be carried out against the Seminoles in Florida.

General Jackson told the Seminole chiefs that they would have to move all their people to one part of the territory where he would give them the same rights as the white men. The chiefs were disturbed over this sudden action and one of them replied:

White people live in towns where many thousands work together on small grounds; but the Seminole is a wild and scattered people. The Seminole swims the streams and leaps over the logs of the forest in pursuit of game, and is like the whooping crane that makes its nest at night far from the spot where it dashed dew from the grass and flowers in the morning. For a hundred summers the Seminole warrior has rested under the shade of his live oaks, and the sun of a hundred winters have risen upon his ardent pursuit of the buck and bear, with none to question or dispute his claims.

Jackson Resigns

It was evident to the Seminoles that the American government was going to be very different from the previous Spanish governors who had let them live as they pleased. Spain had requested in her transfer of Florida to the United States that all the inhabitants, Negroes and Indians alike, become citizens of the United States. However, the Indians and Negroes were not accepted as such even though many Negroes were free men under the Spanish regime.

Realizing that their struggle with the white men was hopeless, many of the Seminoles and their Negro allies, decided to leave Florida. They knew how to build large dugout canoes equipped with mast and sail, capable of carrying over twenty passengers. Therefore, between 1812 and 1840, groups of Seminoles and Seminole-Negroes set out in these crude vessels for the Bahama Islands. In 1820 one such group of 150 persons, led by a medicine man named Scipio Bowlegs, reached the Bahamas, where their descendants still live.

General Jackson, failing to get full support of his policies, soon resigned from his office as military governor of the Florida territory and returned to his home near Nashville, Tennessee.

To keep the Indians away from the coasts of Florida where they would have a better chance to obtain arms and supplies from traders, the territorial government began to herd them onto a small tract of land in central Florida.

The plan to confine the Indians permanently to small tracts in the interior fell short of its objectives because traders, liquor sellers, and settlers began to invade the lands on which the Seminoles had located. Negroes, both freemen and fugitive slaves who had

ST. PETERSBURG TIMES

The Indians built large dugout canoes, which when fitted with a mast and sail, could be used for offshore travel.

become assimilated into the Seminole culture, set up villages near their Indian allies, but even there, they were constantly badgered by slave hunters. The Seminoles were soon crowded out of their limited domain.

Large bands of Seminoles that had been dispersed by General Jackson's forces in 1818, gradually began to recover their strength and united in permanent villages which were located on rich land that the American government wanted for its own people. The task of regimenting these Indians onto inferior lands allocated for them fell to General Jackson's successor as governor, William P. Duval.

Duval, appointed by President Monroe in 1822, was also made commander-in-chief and superintendent of Indian affairs in the territory of Florida. A fair and honest administrator, he was well-liked by both whites and Indians during his twelve year tenure. The Indians respected and trusted him because, they said, he never spoke to them with a "forked tongue".

Since the Seminoles now came under the sovereignty of the United States Government, commissioners were sent to Florida to negotiate the first treaty with them.

At Moultrie Creek near St. Augustine on September 6, 1823, Governor Duval and the commissioners held a council with seventy Seminole Indians representing tribal groups. The governor and Colonel James Gadsden, one of the commissioners, acknowledged the Seminoles as a nation separate from the Creeks.

The Indians were told, however, that they would eventually have to move from the villages and fertile fields along the Suwannee and Apalachicola Rivers to the interior country below Tampa Bay. The chiefs wanted to wait twenty years to consider the suggested move, but their request was ignored. Such chiefs as Neamathla, a Creek chief of a Mikasuki town, and other Seminole leaders knew the land allotted by the white men would not support them. The government representative at the council meeting had not even seen the land where they wanted to send the Indians. Neamathla answered the removal terms with these words:

We rely on your justice and humanity; we hope that you will not send us south to a country where neither the hickory nut, the acorn nor the persimmon grows; we depend much upon these products of the forest for food; in the south they are not to be found.

The chiefs reported that their people numbered almost 5,000 living in thirty-seven towns, and to force them to move away from their established homes would cause much hardship.

However, after days of conferences between the white commissioners and the Indian chiefs, thirty-one Indians signed the treaty on September 18, 1823.

They were promised possession of this land and protection as long as they obeyed the laws of the United States. The land they were given in exchange for the best lands desired by the whites was a large tract twenty miles south of the present town of Micanopy. In addition they were to receive $6,000 cash for the improvements they had made on the property they left and $5,000 every year, thereafter. Rations of corn and salt were promised for one year.

Duval Inspects Land

IRVIN M. PEITHMANN

Sawgrass covers the major part of the Everglades. Scattered here and there are palm-covered hammocks. The crown of the young cabbage palm is used for food.

An Indian agent was to live in the district, and a school was to be established at the agency for their use.

The principal feature of the treaty was that the Indians agreed to prevent runaway slaves from entering their country and to hand over those living among them to their agent. The chiefs who signed reluctantly promised to abide by the treaty obligations.

However, several powerful chiefs refused to sign the treaty or to make any agreement with the whites. Furthermore, they said they would not be bound by any treaty the other chiefs made. Six of them were allowed reserves (lands) on the Apalachicola River in north Florida, but thirty-one of the chiefs who signed agreed to give up all claim to any land in Florida except that assigned to them by the government.

The chiefs had complained so bitterly over the poor land set aside for them that conscientious Governor Duval decided to see if what the chiefs had told him were true. On his return from an inspection tour, he reported the land was so poor that no settlement could ever be made on it because no part of it was worth cultivating. He further states, *It is by far the poorest and most miserable region I ever beheld.*

Governor Duval told the Indians that they need not move and could remain in the area for at least another year. He also stated that there would be no building of houses or planting of crops on their land by the whites during that time.

At the end of the year, the Indians were not ready to move and were clearing land and planting crops. They were given another extension, until November, 1824, in order to harvest their crops already planted.

CHIEF NEAMATHLA

Neamathla, a Creek chief of the Seminole Mikasukis in north Florida was bitterly opposed to the demands of the white men. When Governor Duval tried to persuade him to go to the land reserved for the Indians, he would agree only to go to a site nearby on the Ocklocknee River. He also demanded $600 in silver for improvements he had made on the lands the whites wanted.

In one of his talks with Governor Duval, he became very angry. His dark eyes gleamed with fire, and he struck the table with his clenched fist.

Do you think . . . I am like a bat, that hangs by its claws in a dark cave, and that I can see nothing of what is going on around me? Ever since I was a small boy I have seen the white people steadily encroaching upon the Indians, and driving them from their homes and hunting grounds. When I was a boy, the Indians still roamed undisputed over the country lying between the Tennessee River and the great sea (Gulf of Mexico) of the south, and now, where there is nothing left them but the hunting grounds in Florida, the white men covet that. I will tell you plainly, if I had the power, I would tonight cut the throat of every white man in Florida.

DUVAL REMOVES NEAMATHLA

Later Governor Duval returned to Neamathla's town and found 300 armed warriors in the council

house. Chief Neamathla was speaking to the warriors of his hatred toward the whites. The governor told the Indians present that their chief was a traitor and appointed the sub-chief, Tokos Emathla, (John Hicks) chief.

After some delay, John Hicks brought together at St. Marks, the Indians who had resigned themselves to the move to new land. Since there was not enough transportation for all overland, most of them went by water in their dugout canoes.

Neamathla left Tallahassee with his family in November, 1824, and returned to the Creek nation in Georgia, where he became a chief of one of their towns on the Hutchechubbee River. During an uprising in 1836, Chief Neamathla was captured and brought in irons to Fort Mitchell, Alabama.

Some time later this chief, then eighty-four years old, was handcuffed and chained to other Indians and forced to march ninety miles to Montgomery, Alabama, where they were placed on boats and sent west by way of New Orleans. After they reached Little Rock, Arkansas, their chains were removed and packed in barrels and placed on a returning steamer, the *Revenue.*

At Roe Rock, barrels of provisions and those containing the chains and handcuffs were put ashore. During the night, some Indians rolled the barrels of chains into the river, from which they were never recovered.

INDIAN REMOVAL ACT

The subject of Indian removal had become a national issue by the time Andrew Jackson became president in 1829. His earlier proposal to drive all the Seminoles out of Florida was inspired largely by his strong personal feelings against the Indians, and as more and more settlers moved into the territory, the removal policy gained popular support. After the United States purchased Florida, Americans felt they were entitled to the choice lands the Indians held.

In 1829, the Legislative Council of Florida decreed: "The presence of the Seminoles on this tract of land has seriously impeded the settlement of the best part of Florida."

On May 28, 1830, Jackson signed the Indian Removal Act. It decreed that all Indians still living in the southeastern part of the United States were to be transplanted to Arkansas Territory.

On May 9, 1832, Colonel James Gadsden met and negotiated with the Seminole chiefs at Payne's Landing on the Oklawaha River, northeast of Silver Springs.

When the subject of emigration came up, the Indian chiefs stated: *Let the twenty years pass and we will talk to you.* They were referring to the offer they had made at Moultrie Creek. Colonel Gadsden told them bluntly that their annuity of $15,400 would be withdrawn if they refused to leave.

Finally fifteen chiefs signed the treaty because they were discouraged. The drought that year had ruined their crops and they believed their gods were angry with them and were bringing on their misfortunes. They consented to the white man's terms.

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

In 1840, George Catlin painted this portrait of Osceola Mikanochee. This young Indian boy wears a representative costume of the period.

After some delay another meeting was held between government agents and the Seminole chiefs. At this council, the chiefs agreed to send a delegation west to look over lands in the Indian territory and report back to their people.

DELEGATION GOES WEST

The inspection team selected for the journey into Indian Territory of the west included six chiefs, five of these were John Blunt; Holata Emathla; his son Charley Emathla; Ottee Amathla (Jumper); Foke Luste Hadjo (Black Dirt) and a negro named Abraham who was to represent the Negroes. This man, a runaway slave, was paid one hundred dollars for his services as an interpreter for the Indian delegation. While pretending to be working for the best interests of his people and the Indians, Abraham had actually accepted a bribe from the white men to use his influence in getting the Indians out of Florida.

The inspection team and Major Phagan made the westward journey late in 1832. After they had looked over the lands, the team returned to Fort Gibson in the territory. They were met by the government commissioners and on March 28, 1833, were

Indians Resist

tricked by the treacherous Abraham into signing a cleverly worded agreement which read "should this delegation be satisfied" in order to commit them to something on paper that they had never considered. The chiefs had no authority to sign or make an agreement. By getting the Indians to sign, the government received what it wanted, a pledge from the Indians to vacate Florida.

The Seminoles were highly incensed because a part of the Indian Territory assigned to them was to be occupied by the Creeks. They had incurred the enmity of the Seminoles by giving direct aid to the Americans in reclaiming runaway slaves. Consequently, the Seminoles refused to leave, because the stipulations of removal read "Prepare to emigrate west, and join the Creeks".

IRVIN M. PEITHMANN

At Payne's Landing on the Oklawaha River, northeast of Silver Springs, the Seminole chiefs met the whites in council.

The agreement called the Treaty of Fort Gibson, stipulated that the Seminoles would be separated from the Creeks in the new territory on a large tract of land lying between the Canadian River and the north fork of the stream and extending west to the forks of the Little River.* They said they were pleased with the land but opposed the government's plan to relocate them near the Wichita, Kiowa and Comanche prairie tribes, whose principal occupation was stealing horses. Jumper was indignant that the government proposed to locate them with rogues, as it implied that the Seminoles, too, were dishonest Indians.

John Blunt, another member of this delegation, was a very intelligent Indian. He was one of the chiefs who had refused to sign the treaty at Moultrie Creek some years previous. The chief had served as a guide to Andrew Jackson during the first Seminole War. The Indian chiefs who made up the inspection team seemed to have been selected by the commissioners because they thought these chiefs could be managed. This belief was proved by later events. This so-called treaty was later referred to as a fraud by Hitchcock.*

On the return of the inspection party, there was much dissension among the Indians. Nevertheless, the head chief Micanopy was tired of war and probably would have consented to the agreement had it not been for Osceola, who began to organize the Seminoles into resistance groups. Osceola by now was well-known among his people and the white leaders were begining to fear him.

Major John Phagan, the Indian agent who went west with the Indian delegation, was dismissed from the government Indian service on his return because of his handling of funds. One of the chiefs, Black Dirt, was removed as chief by his people after the inspection trip for exceeding his authority.

Meanwhile, Governor Duval's administration came to an end. In 1834, President Jackson appointed General John Eaton to succeed him as governor. For twelve years, Duval had done all he could to help the Indians in their negotiations with the whites, and he was instrumental in preventing open warfare. His successor was not to be as effective in Indian affairs.

The Seminoles became united stronger than ever against emigration when they learned of the chicanery that had taken place at Fort Gibson. They realized more than ever that the United States Government would stop at nothing in its efforts to get them out of Florida.

In 1835, the government began to put pressure on the Seminole chiefs to get them to emigrate without bloodshed. The three-year time limit imposed on the Indians by the fraudulent Payne's landing agreement was almost at an end. For their part, the Indians refused to recognize the treaty, declaring that they (their representatives) had been tricked into signing it.

Another series of conferences ended in stormy dramatic sessions. Later that year a full scale war developed with the Dade Massacre and the killings at Fort King by Osceola and his warriors.

According to tradition, Osceola was born near the Chattahoochee River in Georgia in 1804, the stepson of William Powell, a white trader. He was called Powell by some of the whites, but he himself scornfully repudiated the name. His mother was a Creek woman of the Red Stick tribe and had married Powell after his father, believed by some to have been a half-breed-Scotch Indian, was killed in battle. Osceola denied he was a quarter-breed and on one occasion said: *No foreign blood runs in my veins; I am pure-blood Muskogee.* This statement has been supported by other Indians and the white men who were acquainted with him and the place of his birth.

*Sometime later the Creeks asked that a change be made in this arrangement and require the Seminoles to live on part of their land and be incorporated with them. Many of the Creeks who emigrated ahead of the Seminoles had settled on lands set aside for the latter. Micanopy and the other chiefs refused to consent to any change from the previous agreement, as the land was already occupied by the Creeks

*Major Ethan Allen Hitchcock, an officer in the Seminole war noted in his diary: The treaty of Payne's Landing in 1832 by which it was attempted to remove the Indians, was a fraud upon them and they have in fact never agreed to emigrate. I say therefore that the Indians are in the right to defend themselves in the country to the best of their ability.

Osceola

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

Osceola in his war costume about a year before his death. The rifle was given him by the agent, Thompson.

The fact that Osceola did not speak the English language is good evidence that he was a pure or full-blooded Indian. However, there is a tradition among the Oklahoma Seminoles that Osceola was not a full-blood Muskogee, but a quarter-breed with a mixture of one-fourth Spanish blood. This could be possible as his mother, Polly Copinger, is thought by some historians to have been a half-breed, her white ancestry probably being of Spanish origin.

About 1808, when he was only four years old, Osceola and his widowed mother came into north Florida to live. In 1812, when Tennessee raiders invaded Florida, they were driven south. Osceola and his mother were captured by Andrew Jackson's forces in 1818 and then released on a promise to return to Georgia. Instead they drifted farther south into Florida. They moved to the vicinity of Silver Springs about 1830.

Many contradictory stories and legends have been written about Osceola, and to erase some of them would leave a void in history. Legends of Indian personages are so deeply rooted in our early history, that they have become a symbol of an era.

Although he lacked the hereditary requirements to be a chief, Osceola had the natural ability for a great war leader. His influence and power among the Seminoles became so great that he was able to suppress the desires and aims of the top chief, Micanopy, who was opposed to continued warfare.

All countries have their war heroes, and Osceola was, and still is, a hero to the Seminoles. "Some men are born great, some achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon them." Osceola achieved greatness and lasting fame and respect not only among the Seminoles, but among his enemies as well because he fought for principles he thought were just and right for his people.

He was fearless but not reckless. It has been said that his affection for his wives and children made him merciful to other women and children. When he went on the warpath, he would say to his warriors, *Spare the women and children; it is not upon them we make war and draw the scalping knife. It is upon men; let us act like men.*

According to tradition Osceola, or *As-se-he-ho-lar* in the Seminole language, means "Black Drink Crier" an appellation bestowed upon him by the young warriors because of his ability to drink large quantities of a ceremonial brew.

It was a practice or custom among the Seminole that after a boy grew to manhood he received a new name, a "war name", which was given him generally as a result of some incident or achievement. Many Seminole leaders and chiefs became known to history by their "war names" as did Osceola.

It was the custom of the Seminole warriors before going on the warpath to gather for a ceremony. The most important part of this ritual was the drinking of a liquid brewed from the leaves of the yaupon tree, a species of holly. It was dark in color, somewhat like strong tea in flavor and rich in caffeine. When drunk, it acted as a mild emetic, laxative, and diuretic. The Seminole name was "Asi", meaning leaves; the whites called it "the black drink".

When the warriors gathered and drank, they emitted quavering calls sounding like Yaholo, the name of the spirit or god thought to preside over the ceremony. They believed that by drinking this brew it would cement friendship among them and give them great strength in battle.

The young Indian, who was later to lead the Seminoles, was called by his people Asi-Yaholo, but the name was corrupted by the white man to Osceola. Several historians agree that the correct orthography of his name is Assiola, however he is universally known as Osceola.

After he came to live in the vicinity of Fort King about 1830 little is known about Osceola, except he became a skilled hunter and a lover of sports. He was

a Muskogee Creek by birth, he grew up in the Seminole tradition.

In a short time, Osceola began to impress the Seminoles by his eloquent speech and latent ability. He also made good impressions at the Fort King Agency because of his manners and willingness to promote understanding between the whites and the Indians. The military hired him as a guide and respected him for his services in bringing troublesome Indians wanted for violations.

Osceola's second wife, Che-cho-ter (Morning Dew) mother of several children, was part Negro. When he brought her to the Fort King trading post, slave hunters claimed her and carried her off. Since she was more Indian than Negro, Osceola considered this act a blood insult to his people and to himself. He partly blamed the Indian agent Wiley Thompson and he held the grudge as long as Thompson lived. Osceola became extremely bitter and bent all his energies on reprisals and revenge. (Historians do not agree on this account of Morning Dew being made a slave.) Shortly thereafter, in his dealings with military officers and traders, he demonstrated his pride to the point of arrogance.

During the summer of 1834, a series of conferences were held at Fort King between the white leaders and neighboring Indian chiefs; the meetings were closed to other Indians. Once while General Clinch was in a closed session with the head chief Micanopy, Osceola stood near the door of the log conference building trying vainly to hear what was being said. He went from window to window and peered into the conference room. Finally unable to control himself any longer, he flung open the closed door and walked in. An American officer made the observation of his impression of Osceola at this time:

Becoming more and more impatient of his exclusion from the conferences he suddenly stalked across the stoop, (porch) jerked out his knife and flourished it above his head in a most savage gesture, never have I seen a more striking figure than he presented, of a fine rigid frame, his costume, as appropriate as it was striking, gave grace and dignity to his attitudes. On his head was a cloth turban, garnished by two long drooping feathers, his hair of glossy blackness fell in profusion around his face of most beautiful variety of expression when unruffled; but now exhibiting a mixture of hate and unconquerable resolution. Couple these characteristics with his sturdy stride, the significant shake of his head and uplifted hand clinching and flourishing with savage ferocity his knife, and you may form some conception of him.

An Indian agency, established in 1825 at a site three miles southwest of Silver Springs, near present day Ocala, became known as Fort King. The site was chosen because many Indians were then living in the nearby region, many of them in several large Seminole Indian towns.

Tension between the Seminoles and the whites concerning Negro slaves continued. The Indians had agreed to surrender all slaves, but white men kept pushing their searches into the Indian's domain. Dishonest men claimed Negroes, cattle, and horses that had never been their property, and fights and reprisals followed. As tension mounted, Fort King was garrisoned with American troops in 1827.

IRVIN M. PEITHMANN

The site of Fort King, located near Ocala. Established first as an Indian agency, it later became a fort during the Second Seminole War, 1835-42.

In February, 1835, General Clinch was sent a government order to force the Indians to move out of Florida, and Fort King was garrisoned with 600 army troops to see that the order was carried out. No action was taken, however, until early in April.

During the Seminole War of 1835-42, this fort was headquarters for all military operations and dealings with the Indians in central Florida. It ceased to be a military post after 1843.

COUNCIL AT FORT KING

General Wiley Thompson, the Indian agent, called the Seminole chiefs to a council at Fort King on April 3, 1835. He again explained to them the government's intention of enforcing the so-called "treaty" of Payne's Landing. They were told to gather their people together, and they were warned that no more arms and ammunition would be sold to the Indians.

Osceola was present and, though he did not represent his people as a spokesman, he was not afraid to speak his mind. This man who was later to become a colorful war leader stood up to Thompson and his staff and in fiery passion said:

Am I a Negro—A slave? My skin is dark, but not black, I am an Indian—A Seminole—The white man shall not make me black. I will make the white man red with blood, and then blacken him in the sun and rain, where the wolf shall gnaw his bones and the buzzard shall live on his flesh.

On April 22, several weeks later, another council or conference was held at Fort King. All the chiefs attended the first day when a letter* from President Jackson was read and interpreted to them.

*This letter is quoted from Trumbull's History of Indian Wars, published in 1840.

Jackson's Letter

"My Children — I am sorry to have heard that you have been listening to bad counsel. You know me, and you know that I would not deceive, nor advise you to do anything that was unjust or injurious. Open your ears and attend now to what I am going to say to you. They are words of a friend, and the words of truth.

"'The white people are settling around you. The game has disappeared from your country. Your people are poor and hungry. All this you have perceived for some time. And nearly three years ago you made an agreement with your friend Colonel Gadsden, acting on the part of the United States, by which you agreed to cede your lands in Florida and to remove and join your brothers, the Creeks, in the country west of the Mississippi. You annexed a condition to this agreement, that certain chiefs named therein, in whom you placed confidence, should proceed to the western country, and examine whether it was suitable to your habits and wants, and whether the Creeks residing there were willing to permit you to unite with them as one people; and if the persons thus sent were satisfied on these heads, then the arrangement with Colonel Gadsden was to be in full force.

"In conformity with these provisions, the chiefs named by you proceeded to that country, and having examined it, and having become satisfied respecting its character and the favorable disposition of the Creeks, they entered into an agreement with the commissioners on the part of the United States, by which they signified their satisfaction on these subjects, and finally ratified the treaty made with Colonel Gadsden.

"I now learn that you refuse to carry into effect the solemn promises thus made by you, and that you have stated to the officers of the United States sent among you, that you will not remove to the western country.

"My Children, I have never deceived, nor will I ever deceive any of the red people. I tell you that you must go, and that you will go. Even if you had the right to stay, how could you live where you are now? You have sold all your country. You have not a piece as large as a blanket to set down upon. What is to support yourselves, your women and children?

"The tract you have ceded will soon be surveyed and sold, and immediately afterward will be occupied by a white population. You will soon be in a state of starvation. You will commit depredations upon the property of our citizens. You will be resisted, punished, perhaps killed.

"Now is it not better peaceably to remove to a fine, fertile country, occupied by your own kindred, and where you can raise all the necessaries of life, and where game is yet abundant. The annuities payable to you and the other stipulations made in your favor, will make your situation comfortable, and will enable you to increase and improve.

"If therefore, you had the right to stay where you now are, still every true friend would advise you to remove; but you have not the right to stay, and you must go. I am very desirous that you should go peaceably and voluntarily. You shall be comfortably taken care of, and kindly treated on the road, and when you arrive in your new country, provisions will be issued to you for a year, so that you can have ample time to provide for your future support.

"But lest some of your rash young men should forcibly oppose your arrangements for removal, I have ordered a large military force to be sent among you. I have directed the commanding officer, and likewise the agent, your friend General Thompson, that every reasonable indulgence be held out to you. But I have also directed that one-third of your people, as provided for in the the treaty, be removed during the present season.

"If you listen to the voice of friendship and truth you will go quietly and voluntarily. But should you listen to the bad birds that are always flying about you, and refuse to remove, I have then directed the commanding officer to remove you by force. This will be done. I pray the Great Spirit, therefore, to incline you to do what is right."

On the second day the head chief, Micanopy, was absent and Thompson wanted to know the reason. Otee Amathla (Jumper) told him Micanopy could not accept the terms of the treaty.

Angrily, Thompson informed the assembled Seminoles that Micanopy was no longer their head chief. This outburst only incensed the chiefs. They considered this a hostile act as it interferred with tribal law. An Indian agent had no authority to remove a chief. Thompson again demanded that they affix their signature, or mark, on the final treaty paper (Fort Gibson) submitting to removal as the original "treaty" (Payne's Landing) has stipulated, but the Indians made no move to sign.

Finally Osceola stepped forward with eyes flashing in true Indian indignation. He drew his knife and pinned the treaty paper to the table, crying in a loud voice: *The land is ours — this is the way I will sign all such treaties.* Osceola walked out of the conference room unmolested.

Thompson was noted for being arrogant, and his insolence toward the chiefs had increased at council meetings. By the use of threats and by exceeding his authority in matters pertaining to tribal affairs, he felt he was master of the situation. But Osceola's conduct astonished him. He had given Osceola a costly rifle, hoping that would win the warrior's friendship to a point where he could deal with him.

All of the white men remembered this incident well and watched for further trouble from this warrior. Though he was not a chief by tribal descent, the Seminoles were looking to him as their leader.

Late in May, 1835, he came often to General Thompson's headquarters at Fort King, behaving insolently. He was outspoken and complained bitterly and contemptuously of the white man's treaties and

promises. At length, Wiley Thompson ordered him arrested and as he was led away to the guard house, struggling against his captors, he cried out in the Creek tongue: *The sun is high, I will remember the hour. The agent has had his day, I will have mine.* He was bound so tightly that his wrists still bore the scars two years later.

While in jail Osceola asked Charley Emathla, a Mikasuki chief who was friendly to the whites, to help get him released. After six days confinement he was freed on his promise that he would use his influence to get the Indians to emigrate.

He did not keep his promise but instead met secretly with other chiefs hostile to the move out of Florida. All agreed that death would be the penalty for any Indian chief caught selling his tribe's livestock or otherwise preparing to leave the area. They also began to hoard ammunition and to buy guns from any available source. After this the Indians quit coming to the fort and all was quiet until December, several months later.

The Seminoles became divided among themselves. Some of the sub-chiefs agreed to remove; but the principal chiefs not only refused to go, but considered all who agreed to submit, as enemies. One of the chiefs (Charley Emathla) who had made arrangements to remove, was shot by Osceola, and most of his warriors joined the hostile party.

Jackson's powerful pleading and warning was not heeded, and the second Seminole War soon followed.

Suddenly in October, 1835, Chief Charley Emathla accepted the conditions of removal and sold his tribe's cattle. He journeyed to Fort King to get his money and was paid the sum stated in the agreement. Osceola was either told by one of his spies or knew of this transaction, and, after the chief had left Fort King and was on his way back to his village, Osceola and his warriors waylaid and killed him. Osceola was so infuriated over Emathla's dealings that he threw the money in the bushes, where it was later found. Other chiefs, hearing of the death of Chief Emathla, abandoned any plans they had for accepting the confidences of the white men. They feared the same fate at the hands of Osceola and his warriors.

So fearful of Osceola were the other Indians that none dared go near the spot where Chief Emathla was killed. His bones lay bleaching for two years until white soldiers gathered and buried them.

The killing served notice to the white men that the Indians under Osceola intended to fight it out.

After Emathla's death, his band of 407 assembled under the leadership of his father, Holata Emathla, and fled to Fort Brooke near Tampa Bay for protection.

The troops stationed at Fort King were dispatched to one of General Clinch's plantations, Lang Syne, a few miles north of Ocala, in December, 1835, leaving only forty-six defenders at the garrison. Both soldiers and civilians had been ordered to remain inside the enclosure.

IRVIN M. PEITHMANN

The Indians, led by chiefs Micanopy, Alligator and Jumper, made a surprise flanking attack on Major Dade and his soldiers from this point near the Fort King Road.

On December 28, store-keeper Erastus Rogers and his two clerks, Mr. Kitzler, and a boy, Robert, went to lunch at Roger's house, which was a few hundred yards outside the enclosure and was bordered on the northwest by a dense thicket. They were still there about the middle of the afternoon. At this time General Wiley Thompson and Lieutenant Constantine Smith were also outside taking a walk some 200 yards away from the fort, near the thicket.

ATTACK ON FORT KING

Suddenly the stillness of the afternoon quiet was broken by the peculiar shrill war whoop of Osceola. About fifty Mikasuki warriors rose from the thicket and fired on the two men. General Thompson was killed instantly. Fourteen rifle balls struck him, and his right breast bore a deep stab wound, thought to have been personally inflicted by Osceola. Lieutenant Smith also was killed by the volley, and both men were then scalped. The store-keeper Rogers and his two clerks were killed in his house. Their cook, a Negro, hid behind a barrel. He saw Osceola enter the room and overturn the table, making sure no one was underneath it. He looked around with a defiant expression and left hurriedly. The Indians looted the store near the fort before disappearing into the wilds to meet Alligator and his warriors, who that same day had wiped out Major Dade and his men.

Dade Battlefield

IRVIN M. PEITHMANN

Dade Battlefield State Park near Bushnell, site of the surprise attack by the Indians on Major Dade and his men. The old Fort King road is to the right center.

These markers have been placed beside the old Fort King Road where Major Dade and his officers were ambushed. This section of the road winds through a pine forest, on the way to Fort King.

Dade Massacre

The Dade "Massacre" occurred on the same day as the attack on Fort King. Major Francis L. Dade with a detachment of eight officers and 102 privates was surprised by a large group of Indians aided by a number of Negroes under the leadership of Halpatter Tustenugee (Alligator), craftiest of the Seminole chiefs.

The government, fearing trouble if it had to transfer the Seminoles forcibly to a reservation outside of Florida, had sent these men from Fort Brooke* near Tampa Bay on the west coast to bolster the armed forces at Fort King.

The soldiers were surrounded and attacked as they marched through the sparse pine and palmetto forested countryside six or seven miles from the Withlacoochee River.

In this battle, all but three soldiers were killed, and, although badly wounded, they escaped capture. Private Ransom Clarke, one of the survivors, was the first to make his way back to Fort Brooke to report the tragedy. The army guide and interpreter, a Negro named Luis Pacheco, is thought to have informed the Indians of the route being taken by the soldiers. He escaped and joined the Indians who had only lost three braves in this fight. The Seminole head chief Micanopy and Otee Amathla (Jumper) took part in this battle. Osceola was at Fort King seeking revenge on General Wiley Thompson.

By a previous agreement both groups met later in the great Wahoo Swamp to celebrate their victories; the warriors received their full reward of praise from Osceola and the other chiefs.

It was not until February, 1836, that Captain Ethan Allen Hitchcock and a detachment of soldiers reached the scene and buried Major Dade and his men in two trenches—the officers in one; the privates in the other. They were buried where they fell, in the southwest section of the present town of Bushnell in Sumter County, in the fight known as the "Dade Massacre."

There had been minor clashes and skirmishes between the Indians and the whites before 1835 that resulted in casualties on both sides. However, a full scale war developed that year which was to last almost eight years.

Osceola, continually active in stirring up resistance among the Indians, emerged as their only strong leader. He was both feared and respected. Many Seminole warriors were ready to entrust their lives to him in the hope of resisting the military power of the United States.

OSCEOLA'S LETTER OF DEFIANCE

During the first half of the war, Osceola was the real leader of the Seminoles. Shortly after open hostilities began he dictated a letter of defiance to General Clinch dated February 2, 1836 which read:

You have guns, so have we—You have powder and lead and so have we—Your men will fight, and so will ours—till the last drop of Seminole blood has moistened the dust of his hunting ground!

IRVIN M. PEITHMANN

This monument marks the place where Major Francis L. Dade was shot from his horse on December 28, 1835

BATTLE OF WITHLACOOCHEE RIVER

In December, 1835, 230 men under command of General D. L. Clinch and Brigadier General R. K. Call were sent on a scouting expedition. This army was seeking a concentration of Indians thought to be hiding out in a little known area called the Cove of Withlacoochee, a region of lakes and swamps lying adjacent to the southern part of the Withlacoochee River. (This area today is known as Lake Tsala Apopka.)

The troops reached the river at dawn on December 31, hoping to find a ford or shallow place to cross. Instead they found the river deep and swift in this section. Many of the soldiers swam across while their arms and ammunition were ferried over on a long raft

*Fort Brooke, a log fort, was built in 1823 as a protection against Indians. A post office called Tampa Bay was established in 1831, and three years later was changed to Tampa.

General Scott

IRVIN M. PEITHMANN

The Withlacoochee River was the scene of bitter fighting during the Second Seminole War. Major Dade and his soldiers were killed nearby. A few days later, a scouting expedition was attacked as they attempted to ford this river. Several months later, General Gaines and over 1000 men were surrounded and besieged for ten days by the Indians.

As soon as the first soldiers were across they were attacked by about 200 Indians concealed in the heavy thicket along the shore. Since the troops had Indian guides, it is thought that they were deliberately led into the ambush. The Indians were reinforced as the battle progressed; therefore the soldiers recrossed the river under heavy fire and abandoned the fight.

The Indians and Negroes were led by Osceola and Alligator, and about thirty Indians were killed in the engagement. Osceola was disabled by a bullet wound in his arm. Four soldiers were killed and fifty-nine were wounded in the command which consisted of army regulars and volunteers, or militia, who had enlisted to serve only a few months. At this time, they were unaware of the tragedy that had befallen Major Dade's command three days before and only a few miles away.

GENERAL SCOTT TAKES COMMAND

General Winfield Scott was placed in command January 31, 1836. The Dade Massacre and the attack on General Clinch's troops on the Withlacoochee River convinced the government leaders that the Seminoles would not be easily subdued in the wild jungle country of Florida.

The Indians had regained their fighting spirit under their war leader Osceola, and the position of the soldiers stationed in Florida had become desperate because the Indians hiding in the swamps came out in war parties to raid and harrass the armed forces.

By the end of 1836, the troops under General Scott had won no victories over the Indians. At this time the end of the struggle seemed nowhere in sight; trails could not be used; roads were non-existent; and transportation of supplies was by water over the rivers to inland forts and strongholds. This was always a dangerous undertaking because the Indians concealed themselves along the shoreline and made hit and run attacks on the boats.

A block house or small fort near the mouth of the Withlacoochee River was under attack for several months. The garrison under Captain Halliman was threatened with starvation until Colonel Leigh Read outfitted a fully armed boat at St. Marks and removed the besieged soldiers.

GENERAL GAINES TROOPS ATTACKED

Early in 1836, General Edmund P. Gaines had made a forced overland march from Fort Brooke (Tampa) to Fort King with 1,100 men. Arriving there, he found that there were not sufficient provisions for his men and horses for a long stay; so he decided to return to Fort Brooke. On the return march the troops were attacked on February 27 near the Withlacoochee River by Indians and refugee Negroes.

The Negroes, led by a man named Ino, joined forces with Osceola and his warriors for the sudden, vigorous assault. The stunned, disorganized troops threw up a breastwork of logs and sent a messenger to General Duncan Clinch at Fort Drane, asking for reinforcements. The troops held out for ten

days, by the end of this time all the horses had been killed for food.

John Caesar, one of the Negro leaders, finally approached the besieged camp and asked for a parley. A cease-fire was arranged, and Osceola and two other Indians came under a flag of truce to the army camp. No sooner had the parley begun, however, when the relief expedition under General Clinch arrived and immediately opened fire. Two Indians and one Negro were killed. Osceola and the others fled, charging bad faith.

General Winfield Scott severely reprimanded General Gaines for this futile march to Fort King and his unsuccessful encounter with the Indians on the Withlacoochee River.

BIG WAHOO SWAMP BATTLE

General Richard Keith Call, was joined by General Armstrong and 1,200 soldiers from Tennessee. In November, 1836, they crossed the Withlacoochee River and attacked a large Indian encampment. The Indians fought a desperate engagement and fled into the swamps.

GENERAL JESUP TAKES COMMAND

General Thomas Jesup was placed in command of the Federal troops in Florida on December 8, 1836. The U. S. government was more than a little concerned that the war was dragging on at considerable expense and loss of life. Also, the war was becoming unpopular, and public opinion demanded its termination as soon as possible.

After several debates in Congress, the public learned of the activities of the administration in its dealings in slaves, especially free Negroes in Florida territory. It became public knowlege that the war in Florida was conducted largely as a slave catching enterprise for the benefit of a few citizens of Florida and Georgia.

On March 6, 1837, General Jesup succeeded in making a deal with the Seminoles in which he promised the Indians that free Negroes and the Seminoles' slaves, could go west with them. They owned over 200 Negro slaves at this time. On these conditions Chief Micanopy, at the suggestion of the Negro Abraham, agreed to emigrate and brought 250 of his people to Fort Brooke near Tampa Bay.

OSCEOLA DISTRUSTS JESUP

Osceola could not concur in Micanopy's decision. He folded his arms and walked out of the Indian encampment near the fort.

He had a premonition of bad faith on the part of General Jesup, and his suspicions turned out to be correct. The General allowed white men to enter the Indian camps at Tampa and seize Negroes. By no means were all of the Negroes slaves, for they included several generations of Negroes who had been born in Florida of former slave parentage. They were Seminole by culture if not by race.

The Indians had further reason to regret the agreement with General Jesup when they reached Fort Brooke. They learned then that they were to be settled in the Indian Territory among their old enemies, the Creeks, with whom they had had trouble over runaway slaves twenty years earlier. Osceola

FROM AN OLD PRINT

Chief Coacoochee, or "Wild Cat", captured with Osceola effected a miraculous escape from a military prison. He rallied the remaining Seminoles for the last big battle of the war.

rescued Micanopy, Jumper, and other chiefs, together with many of the young braves and fled from Fort Brooke during the night.

In September, 1837, Chief Henita Imathla (King Philip) and thirty-five of his tribesmen were captured and brought to St. Augustine. Coacoochee, better known as Wild Cat, who was also a prisoner, was released and induced to take messages to Osceola to come to a point seven miles from St. Augustine to consider terms.

OSCEOLA SEEKS PARLEY

Osceola led and inspired the Seminoles until late in the year 1837. His health began to fail, due to chronic malaria and after having received messages from Wild Cat, he agreed to another parley with army officers.

Osceola sent word to General Jesup that he was ready to meet for another parley and that he would like the General to come without escort to confer with him. General Jesup, fearing the Indians might seize him or other officers as hostages, sent General Joseph M. Hernandez to talk to them. At the same time he planned to trap Osceola and his warriors by instructing Colonel Ashby's company to surround them as soon as the parley got under way.

Dade Battlefield State Park

This park is dedicated to the memory of those brave soldiers who here lost their lives.

IRVIN M. PEITHMANN

A replica of the triangular breastwork of logs at the Dade Battlefield State Park near Bushnell, Florida.

The marker reads: "The survivors of the first attack by the Indians retreated to this point and hastily threw up a breastwork of logs. Here they made their last fight. A detachment under General Goines, on February 20, 1836, buried Dade and his men here. The bodies were removed to St. Augustine on August 15, 1842."

This battle fought on December 28, 1835, known as the "Dade Massacre", was the beginning of the Second Seminole War 1835-42. This war was the costliest war ever waged by the United States against the Indians in America.

Capture of Osceola

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

Chief King Philip was the son of a Spanish duke and the father of Wild Cat, although a half-breed he took part in the Seminole Councils. (From a portrait by Catlin)

Osceola's party of seventy-one warriors, sixteen women, and four Indian-Negroes started for the place agreed upon by both parties. They sent Wild Cat ahead with a white plume and pipe, the Indian equivalent of a flag of truce, to make contact with the army officers. In addition to discussing peace terms, Osceola also wanted to arrange the release of old chief King Philip, still a prisoner at Fort Marion.

After the parley began, there was small talk not concerned with the meeting. Suddenly Osceola and his party realized that they were surrounded by a circle of armed soldiers. Choking with emotion because of this latest treachery, Osceola turned to a companion and said in a pathetic voice: *You must talk; I am overcome.* With those dramatic words, the great leader who thought that he was engaged in an honest parley with the whites refused to say another word.

It is believed that the war would have ended here if the white men had made an honest attempt at negotiations, for Osceola was apparently sincere in his efforts to arrive at a peace treaty with General Jesup.

PRISONERS TRANSFERRED

The imprisoned chiefs were transferred from Fort Marion near St. Augustine to Fort Moultrie, Charleston, South Carolina, for security reasons and finally sent west. Osceola was too ill to be moved. His two wives and two children were allowed to stay with him. George Catlin, the famous painter of Indians, painted his portrait just five days before he died.

Osceola did not survive long in prison; a severe inflammation of his throat caused death in a few months. On January 30, 1838, Osceola died, a true defender of his people.

The many indignities to which Osceola was subjected while he lived continued after his death. Dr. Frederick Weedon an army physician who attended Osceola during his last illness removed his head before he was buried. Later the head of Osceola was taken to the New York Academy of Medicine where it was lost in a fire in 1866.

Catlin has left an excellent account of Osceola's last days:

"The prisoners who are held here, to the number of 250 men, women and children, have been captured during the recent part of this warfare, and amongst them the distinguished personages; Os-ce-o-la, Mick-e-no-pa, the head chief of the tribe, and Cloud, King Philip, and several others of the distinguished men of the nation, who have celebrated themselves in the war that is now waging with the United States Government.

"Of these the most conspicuous at this time is Os-ce-o-la, commonly called, Powell, as he is generally supposed to be a half-breed, the son of a white man (by that name), and a Creek woman. I have painted him precisely in the costume in which he stood for his picture, even to a string and a trinket. He wore three ostrich feathers in his head, and a turban made of a vari-colored cotton shawl and his dress was chiefly of calicos, with a handsome bead sash or belt around his waist, and a rifle in his hand.

"This young man is, no doubt, an extraordinary character, as he has been for some years reputed, and doubtless, looked upon by the Seminoles as the master spirit and leader of the tribe, although not a chief. From his boyhood, he has led an energetic and desperate sort of life, which had secured for him a conspicuous position in society; and when the desperate circumstances of war were agitating his country, he at once took a conspicious and decided part; and in some way, whether he deserved it or not, acquired an influence and a name that soon sounded to the remotest parts of the United States, and amongst the Indian tribes to the Rocky Mountains.

"This gallant fellow, who was undoubtedly captured a few months since, with several of his chiefs and warriors was at first brought in to Fort Mellon in Florida, and afterwards sent to this place for safe keeping where he is grieving with a broken spirit and ready to die, cursing white men, no doubt, to the end of his breath.

"The surgeon of the post, Dr. Weedon, who has charge of him, and has been with him ever since he was taken prisoner, has told me from day to day, that he will not live many weeks; and I have my doubts whether he will, from the rapid decline I

Osceola, the Warrior

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

George Catlin's famous portrait of Osceola, painted a few days before Osceola died in prison at Fort Moultrie, South Carolina. He is shown in the costume he wore at the time he was attempting to make contact under a flag of truce with General Jesup's officers.

Catlin Paints Chiefs

FLORIDA STATE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Fort Marion near St. Augustine is the oldest fort in the United States, it is now a National Monument. (For historical account see page 46).

have observed in his face and his flesh since I arrived here.

"During the time that I have been here, I have occupied a large room in the officers' quarters, by the politeness of Captain Morrison, who has command of the post, and charge of the prisoners; and on every evening after painting all day at portraits, I have had Os-ce-o-la, Mick-e-no-pa, Cloud, Co-a-had-jo, King Philip, and others in my room, until a late hour at night, where they have taken great pains to give me an account of the war, and the mode in which they were captured, of which they complain bitterly.

"I am fully convinced from all that I have seen, and learned from the lips of Osceola, and from the chiefs who are around him, that he is a most extraordinary man, and one entitled to a better fate.

"In stature he is about mediocrity with an elastic and graceful movement; in his face he is good looking, with rather an effeminate smile; but of so peculiar a character, that the world may be ransacked over without finding another just like it. In his manners, all his conversation is entirely in his own tongue; his general appearance and actions, those of a full blooded wild Indian.

"Since I finished my portrait of Osceola, and since writing the first part of this letter, he has been extremely sick, and lies so yet, with an alarming attack of the quinsy or severe sore throat, which will probably end his career in a few days.*

"The steamer starts tomorrow morning for New York and I must use the opportunity; so I shall from necessity, leave the subject of Osceola and the Seminoles for future consideration.

"About half an hour before he died, he seemed to be sensible that he was dying; and although he could not speak, he signified by signs that he wished me to send for the chiefs and for the officers of the fort, whom I called in. He made signs to his wives (of whom he had two, and also two fine little children by his side), to go and bring his full dress, which he wore in time of war; which having been

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

Chief Micanopy, the Head Chief of the Florida Seminoles was captured during the latter part of the Second Seminole War and imprisoned. After his people arrived in the new Territory, he continued as their chief.

*From accounts which left Fort Moultrie a few days after I returned home, it seems that this ill-fated warrior died, a prisoner, the next morning after I left him. And the following very interesting account of his last moments, was furnished me by Dr. Weedon, the surgeon who was with him, with the officers of the garrison at Osceola's request.

brought in, he rose up in his bed, which was on the floor, and put on his shirt, his leggings and moccasins—girded on his war belt—his bullet pouch and powder-horn, and laid his knife by his side on the floor. He then called for his red paint, and his looking glass, which was held before him, when he deliberately painted one half of his face, his neck and his throat—his wrists—the backs of his hands, and the handle of his knife, red with vermillion; a custom practiced when the irrevocable oath of war and destruction is taken. His knife he then placed in its sheath, under his belt; he carefully arranged his turban on his head, and his three ostrich plumes that he was in the habit of wearing in it. Being thus prepared in full dress, he laid down a few minutes to recover strength sufficient, when he rose as before, and with a benignant and pleasing smile, extended his hand to me and all of the officers and chiefs that were around him; and shook hands with us all in dead silence; and also with his wives and little children; he made a signal for them to lower him down upon his bed, which was done, and then he slowly drew from his war-belt, his scalping knife, which he firmly grasped in his right hand, laying it across the other, on his breast, and in a moment smiled away his last breath, without a struggle or a groan."

He was buried with military honors. A stone marking his grave at Fort Moultrie is inscribed: "Osceola, Patriot and Warrior." His capture under false pretense and treachery will long be remembered by the Seminoles.

There were many Indian leaders and chiefs in American-Indian history who "stood up to be counted." Among the Seminoles, Osceola, their war leader, had been their greatest inspiration and hope.

After Osceola was seized, General Jesup was surprised at the American public's reaction to the manner in which the capture was made. His only comment was, *If it was lawful to remove them it was lawful to seize them.* The same people who had called for more energetic action to bring the war to an end, also condemned as inexcuseable treachery, the violation of a flag of truce.

CHEROKEES TRY TO END WAR

John Ross, the Cherokee chief, on a visit to Washington from the Indian territory was asked by John H. Sherbourne, a Special Agent of the United States, to send a Cherokee delegation to Florida to consult with Seminole prisoners at Fort Marion near St. Augustine. The objective of the mission was to get the Seminole chiefs to stop fighting and leave Florida. The delegation consisted of Hair Conrad, Jesse Bushyhead, Thomas Woodward, Richard Fields, and the interpreter, Major Polecat.

On their arrival in Florida, they were taken to General Thomas Jesup's headquarters at Picolata. The next day the group went to Fort Marion to talk to the Seminole chiefs. They were accompanied by the special agent and the commander of the fort.

The Cherokees appeared in full tribal costumes, and the meeting was held in the square inside the fort. The Seminole chiefs took their seats, and the Cherokee delegation faced them, with Colonel Sherbourne on their right and next to him Captain Brown, the General's aide. Other officers stood nearby. The talk prepared by Chief Ross was delivered by one of the Seminoles, it asked the visitors to go into the forests to try to induce the Seminole warriors to surrender and make ready to move west. Messages from the prisoners were to be transmitted by the Cherokees.

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

Chief Yohalochee, or Cloud was one of the Seminole war chiefs betrayed into surrendering by the deceived Cherokee delegation.

Osceola was present and said a few words, but illness prevented him from a major role in the meeting. With a warning from Wild Cat of the dangers of trying to contact Seminole war parties in the field, the Cherokee delegation left on November 28, 1837, taking the Seminole sub-chief Coahadjo or Mad Partridge as a guide.

They went into the swamps a distance of sixty miles to Chickasaw Creek, where they met the Seminole Mikasuki chiefs in council. They read Chief Ross' message through an interpreter to the assembled chiefs and warriors, who received it in friendship from their red brothers. After the pipe of peace had been smoked and other Indian ceremonies concluded, the principal chief, Micanopy, along with Yahalochee or Cloud, eleven other chiefs, and about twenty warriors, agreed to accompany the Cherokee delegation to General Jesup's headquarters and

Wild Cat Escapes

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

Chief Coahadjo was captured with Osceola and took part in much of the fighting during the Second Seminole War (From a portrait by Catlin)

negotiate. They arrived at Fort Mellon on December 3, 1837.

Soon after, a conference was held at which Micanopy said he wanted peace and was ready to surrender and bring his people in for removal. He explained that they were widely scattered because of warfare and that he would need time to get them together. General Jesup answered that he had been deceived before and, therefore, could not grant this request. He had all of the Seminoles present arrested and made prisoners and held them as hostages for the surrender of their families. Messages from the prisoners were sent with directions to their families to give themselves up. It was another incident of General Jesup's lack of integrity which often led him to violate the elementary rules of civilized warfare.

The Cherokee delegation was humiliated by the outward appearance that they were "'accessories after the fact" in the deception by which the Seminoles were trapped. The Cherokee delegation begged for an opportunity to clear themselves with the captives. After several refusals, they were permitted to go to the prison in the fort where they told the unhappy Seminoles they were in no way responsible for the situation and had acted in good faith.

When Chief John Ross heard what happened he was incensed and humiliated that he and his tribesmen had been so used by the treacherous Jesup and his officers. Chief Ross wrote an indigant letter of protest to the Secretary of War over this affair and cited the solemn obligations of the military when dealing with an adversary under a flag of truce. It was a sacred symbol, recognized by every nation, civilized and uncivilized. In this letter and in subsequent letters to the Secretary of War, he pleaded for the release of the Seminole captives, but all pleas were ignored by officials in Washington.

Shortly after the Cherokee delegation had visited the prisoners, Wild Cat, who had been brought to Fort Marion at St. Augustine, made a remarkable escape. Wild Cat and Talmus Hadjo one dark night climbed eighteen feet to the top of their cell and crawled through a small aperture and dropped themselves into the moat below. Both men were hurt in the fall but made their escape. They had taken herb medicine and starved themselves for several weeks so they could squeeze through the opening in the wall. Seventeen other Indians confined in the same room also made their escape the same night.

After getting out of the fort, they made their way through the countryside and finally rejoined their people on the Tomoka River. While recuperating after the ordeal, the Indians were told of what

IRVIN M. PEITHMANN

This monument, seven miles southeast of the town of Okeechobee, marks the site of the Battle of Okeechobee. One of the most decisive encounters of the war.

Battle of Okeechobee

IRVIN M. PEITHMANN

The inscription on the nearby monument reads:

"In these woods on Christmas Day, 1837, was fought the Battle of Okeechobee, in which a large band of Seminole Indians, under Chiefs Wild Cat, Alligator, and Sam Jones was routed by a brigade led by Colonel Zachary Taylor, consisting of the First, Fourth and Sixth Regiments of Infantry of the regular Army and the First Regiments of Missouri Volunteers totaling about 800 men. Fighting was close, desperate and bloody. Losses—Seminoles, unknown; Whites, 28 killed, 111 wounded. This action was the turning point of organized resistance in Florida".

had happened to them. On hearing of the treacherous act of General Jesup in capturing Osceola and other Indian leaders who had come to parley with the Cherokees, the remaining Seminoles became infuriated.

The fugitive Wild Cat took up the fight and led his people until their rapidly diminishing ranks could no longer resist the superior forces of the United States Government.

He often said: *The day and manner of my death is given out, so that whatever I may encounter I fear nothing. If death is to come I will die like a man, if not I will go safely through.*

Even while Osceola was in prison, the war had continued. Near Lake Okeechobee on Christmas Day, 1837, an army of about 1,100 men, of which seventy were Delaware Indians, under the command of Colonel Zachary Taylor, attacked about 480 Seminoles led by Alligator, the fugitive Coacoochee (Wild Cat), Aripeka or Sam Jones and Otolke-Thloco (The Prophet) a sub-chief. Billy Bowlegs also took part in this battle.

This engagement was one of the fiercest of the Seminole war and took place in a saw grass marsh. During the three hour hand-to-hand encounter, twenty-eight soldiers were killed and 111 were wounded. The Indians fared much better, losing only fourteen of their warriors before they withdrew from the battle.

The mounted troops were helpless in this swampy terrain, and the foot soldiers were also handicapped. The Indians disappeared into the swamps, and the issue remained unsettled, but Colonel Taylor was promoted to brigadier general for his role in this engagement.

After the Christmas Day battle, other skirmishes took place in other parts of Florida. One such conflict occurred at a crossing on the St. Johns River in which seven soldiers were killed and twenty-nine wounded.

FORT JUPITER ERECTED

Late in February, 1838, General Thomas Jesup moved his army east of Lake Okeechobee and erected a post called Fort Jupiter. From there, detachments of soldiers were sent into the swamps in search of Indians. They encountered much hardship and suffering as they tramped through the mud and swamps; and their officers, discouraged and sick of

the service, were eager to get out of the country.

PUBLIC RESENTMENT

During the Seminole War from 1835 to 1842, St. Augustine had been prominent in the national news. Many refugees from surrounding territory camped in the city, and many Indian prisoners and hostages were confined in the dungeons of the fort. After Osceola's death in 1838, the settlement became increasingly familiar. Popular sentiment had strongly opposed the tactics employed in his capture, and this feeling became more bitter when the great warrior's life ended in an American prison.

GENERAL JESUP URGED TO END WAR

Some 8,000 troops engaged in the winter campaign of 1837-38 met with little success. General Jesup was under fire and he was ready to admit defeat. General Abram Eustis urged General Jesup to end the war by a truce with the Indians, a truce which would allow them to remain in the Everglades.

The Secretary of War gave General Jesup permission to make a temporary truce with the Indians whereby they would stay south of Peace River, but he directed the General to drive out or destroy the hostile Indians who made raids on the settlers.

The Indians, who remained, were fighting desperately for their homes and families. As they continued to outmaneuver Jesup, he conceived ways and means to trick them. The previous so-called treaties between him and certain chiefs, brought about through the cunning Abraham had never been ratified by the Senate, but they were used by General Jesup to impose obligations and punishments on all the Indians.

General Jesup called a council of the Indians at Fort Jupiter on March 19, 1838. The Indians, fearful of treachery, refused to attend the council and made preparations to leave the area. General Jesup ordered out his troops and captured all those in camp and those who had left. Indians numbering 513 were rounded up along with 165 Negroes, all of whom were sent to Tampa Bay. On March 24, 1838, General Jesup sent the Negro Abraham and Holahtochee to General Taylor to inform him of his success in capturing the Indians at Fort Jupiter.

Meanwhile, messengers were dispatched to Alligator and his band on the west side of the Lake Okeechobee with news of the capture. The chief and his band of 360 Indians and Negroes, of whom 100 were warriors, gave up the fight and surrendered to General Taylor. They were marched to Tampa Bay and kept under the surveillance of troops. Here they were held for two months until slave traders had a chance to look over the Negroes.

During a dance which lasted a day and a night, while the drums beat out the rhythm of White Feather, a Seminole dance, Alligator and thirty Indians escaped. The others were put on board vessels and sent to New Orleans.

Alligator later came to a camp at Warm Springs near Lake Panasofkee and was induced to go to Fort King where he was made a prisoner. His band of warriors were then lured into a trap and captured.

Finding their leader in prison, some of the warriors accused him of betraying them. This aroused the chief to such fury that he struck down two of the Indians and bit off the ear of a third. He was sent with his family to Tampa Bay, and on July 11, 1838, the family was sent to New Orleans and sometime later arrived at Fort Gibson in the Indian territory.

General Thomas Jesup was recalled from command of the army in Florida to make a report of campaigns to the Secretary of War. He attempted to justify his actions while in command. General Zachary Taylor was temporarily given the post vacated by General Jesup, and he continued in this capacity until the early part of 1839.

In April, 1839, General Alexander Macomb was sent from Washington to Florida and took over command of the army from General Taylor. General Macomb released the Indians previously captured by Taylor and sent them back to their people in the swamps, promising to leave them in peace.

COUNCIL AT FORT KING

Halek Tustenugge, a Mikasuki chief about thirty years old, and other warriors came to Fort King for a conference. Here they were received in a friendly manner by General Macomb and his officers. The customary Indian ceremonies were performed, but the appearance of a large number of officers in full uniform embarrassed the Indians present. After they were told that the officers' dress designated them as followers of the Great Chief (President of the United States), the Indians were satisfied.

The General explained briefly and to the point the object of the meeting. He told the Indians the white and red man could once more be at peace if they were willing to comply with his demands.

The Indians departed the next day and returned in eight days with 100 warriors headed by Chitto Tustenugge. He represented Arpeika or Sam Jones, the principal chief of the Mikasukis, who was now too old to travel. This deputy chief was about forty years old, very dignified and reserved, and he spoke pleasantly, but only when spoken to. The Indians respected him and seemed gratified in having him as their counselor.

A big council house was erected near Fort King to hold the large gathering. All the officers at the fort were escorted to the council by a band of the Seventh Infantry, and a company of dragoons on foot. White flags were hoisted at different places and a large fire was built in the center of the council house. The Indians came and silently took their places. Pipes and tobacco were given them, and, as the Indians smoked their pipes, they shook hands with all those present.

The terms of peace were carefully explained to them. They were to retire to the country near Lake Okeechobee where they would be guaranteed pro-

tection if they remained in the area of Florida that was designated. To this the Indians agreed with sincerity and friendship; they were willing to go to any part of Florida to avoid repetitions of past conflicts. After a four-hour session, the council meeting broke up, and the Indians departed south to their homes near Lake Okeechobee.

AN AGREEMENT REACHED

General Macomb's announcement on May 18 that a peaceful settlement had been reached was well received by the country. But the treaty was denounced by the people of Florida who demanded the removal or annihilation of all the Indians. Among these were people who were profiting by supplying food and materials to the troops. Moreover, the treaty was expected to bring scattered bands of Indians out of their hiding places near white settlements and roads and to concentrate them in one area far removed from the white population. This was not to be accomplished easily.

There were other well-armed bands on the Ten Thousand Islands and deep in the Big Cypress Swamps. The Mikasuki Indians held their Green Corn Dance in June. Old Aripeka (whom the whites called Sam Jones, Billy Bowlegs, Chitto, and Halleck Tustenugge were in attendance. They spoke bitterly against the white man's attempt to remove them. One medicine man whom they called Prophet said:

In the old days the white men had come like beggars to the powerful lodges of the old people.....They returned in multitudes like angry wasps with lies in their mouths seeking the Indian's lands. The Indians had forsaken the old ways of the elder people, the ways of power and of peace, and had followed the evil ways of white men until their strength was gone from them. Now even this last land which the Great Spirit had given them the white man wanted also.

He told them that only by prayer and fasting could they still drive the white man into the sea from which he came. When the Corn Dance festival ended, 250 warriors led by their war leader Che-ki-ka went on the warpath and made several raids.

The treaty stipulated that a trading post was to be established in the region reserved for the Indians. Colonel William S. Harney proceeded about eight miles up the Caloosahatchee River with a trader and his stock of goods, but before the post was completed it was attacked. About daylight on the morning of July 23, 1839, the company of thirty-two men at the post were surprised by Spanish Indians who killed eighteen of the party.

The public thought that the Indians responsible for this were the Seminoles who had attended the meeting at Fort King. General Macomb and his treaty therefore, came in for much criticism. But the leaders of the Indians immediately came forward and told the authorities that their people had nothing to do with this bloody affair.

MORE FORTS ERECTED

Forts and stockades were erected at strategic points, and by the end of 1839, seventy forts had been established. Through the summer of that year, the army had only destroyed 1,500 acres of corn and pumpkins, which was only a small part of the well-concealed fields the Indians had under cultivation. During this period about 200 thatched shelters were burned, but very few Indians were seen and few were killed or captured. From a military point of view the Indian campaign of 1839 was a failure.

BLOODHOUNDS USED TO HUNT THE INDIANS

The governor and council of Florida purchased thirty-three bloodhounds from Cuba to be used in tracking down the Indians. This method had long been used in hunting runaway slaves but never before tried on Indians. This new weapon brought indignant protests to Washington from all over the country. However, it was demonstrated that these dogs were of little value, and the practice of using them was soon discontinued.

CHIEFS BROUGHT BACK FROM TERRITORY

As the campaign of 1840 got under way, Captain John Page asked two principal Seminole chiefs, Holahtochee and Nocoseohola, of the Indian territory, to accompany him to Florida in an effort to influence the Indians to agree to move west.

ALLIGATOR SENDS MESSAGE

On October 1, 1840, two chiefs and twelve other Indians with two interpreters prepared to leave the Fort Gibson Agency in the west and return to Florida. Alligator, formerly one of the most uncompromising of the Seminole chieftains, sent a message to the Indians still holding out in Florida, hoping that they would now leave the country without further trouble.

There were army officers who believed that the war would not be over for a long time. These same officers who knew the facts were disgusted with the way the Indians had been duped and tricked. They considered it an unjust war and their sympathies went out to the Indians.

Major Ethan Allen Hitchcock, who kept a diary while serving in the army during the war, made notes of his contacts with fellow officers. On October 22, 1840, he wrote a long letter to his brother Samuel Hitchcock of St. Louis, Missouri, telling him what he thought about the situation in Florida as it existed at that time:

"In 1836—I thought when I heard of the massacre of Major Dade and his command—that the Indians had made a treaty to emigrate in good faith and had violated their engagements, signalizing their violation of faith with the most wholesale and barbarous murders. In that opinion, as you know I entered Florida as a volunteer, being on furlough at the time. I no sooner reached Fort King and had access to officers who had been witnesses of the proceedings of the government than I entirely changed my mind and I ascertained the history of the matter to be substantially this: That some 20 years ago a treaty was made at Fort Moultrie by which the government undertook to secure the Seminoles in the peaceable

Bloodhounds Used

FROM AN OLD PRINT

The Governor of Florida was authorized by the Council to purchase thirty-three bloodhounds in Cuba. These dogs were then used to hunt and track down the Indians who were making a last ditch stand to stay in their native Florida. This new weapon, brought indignant protests from all over the country to Washington, and the practice of using dogs was soon discontinued.

possession of this country for the period of 20 years. This is important, for, if the Indians had no right to the country before the treaty (which has been alleged) they had an undoubted right after it.

"When negotiations were opened with them in 1832 to induce emigration, the Indians at once answered 'let the 20 years pass and we will talk to you.' This was the language to the Government Commissioner for several days in succession, when the articles in the treaty proposed for their acceptance were altered by introducing one article giving the interpreter (Abraham) $100 and another by which the Indians were to send a delegation of six Indians to examine the new country west of the Arkansas (river).

"The negro interpreter, was a runaway slave from Pensacola on whom the $100 in prospect operated as a bribe and it was so spoken of by the commissioner in an interview with General Jackson in the presence of Captain Thurston, who stated the fact to me. Colonel Gadsden, commissioner, remarked to President Jackson, that he 'never could have done anything with the Indians if he had not bribed the interpreter with $100.

"The Indians have always held one language in regard to their understanding of the treaty. They have from first to last uniformly declared that the deputation to examine the new country had no power to confirm the treaty, but were to return and report the result of their observations when they, the tribe, were to assent or dissent.

The deputation, however, was induced while at Fort Gibson (as I've heard, even under threats that they would not otherwise return to their friends) to sign a paper signifying that they were satisfied with the country designated for them in the treaty. This paper was regarded by President Jackson as completing the treaty and the Senate ignorantly ratifying it, it became, to appearance, the law of the land in '33 I believe. Two or three years were lost, however, before any decided step was taken by the government to enforce the treaty, during which time the President was fully advised of the state of the facts and of the disposition of the Indians, in the face of which he ordered the treaty to be carried into effect.

"The immediate consequence was the murder by the Indians of the principal chief (Charley Emathla) who was favorable to emigration, which was followed by the murder of the Indian agent, Wiley Thompson, whose arrogance and insolence had been conspicuous in council with the Indians, extending to the usurpation of authority by which he confined Osceola (sic) in chains and went through the form of degrading sundry chiefs from their dignity in the tribe; a thing unheard of before and impossible in execution from the nature of the case. The war was then fairly entered upon and we are no nearer its termination than when we commenced; while Florida, from its present condition, opens a field of runaway Negroes and desperate white men, the Indians are growing stronger every day, and there is reasonable ground to doubt whether fewer than 20,000 men could quiet the country short of five years to come, and it

might require ten years.

"I give you this little sketch in order that you may estimate the feelings with which I now enter this country, five years ago I came a volunteer, willing to make every effort in my power to be of service in 'punishing', as I thought, the Indians. I now come, with the persuasion that the Indians have been wronged and I enter upon one of the most hopeless tasks that was ever given a man to perform." (Later Major Hitchcock became a Major General).

ARMY OFFICERS PARLEY WITH INDIANS

Escorted by Captain Boneville and his dragoons, General Walker K. Armistead and a large number of troops joined the Indian delegation from the western territory on November 7, 1840 at Fort King. Some of the Indians came to the fort with several deer they had killed, and reported that Haleck Tustenugge and his band were camped nearby. The Indians shook hands with the Indian delegation from the west. There were some smiles of recognition, but on the whole it was a cool reception.

General Armistead with Colonel Worth and several officers, escorted by a company of dragoons, went to the camp of Haleck Tustenugee for an interview.

INDIANS SUSPECT TREACHERY

In the camp were fifty to seventy Indians, fully armed. Their rifles were laid upon logs, loaded, and made ready for use. They were rightfully suspicious, and they did not intend to be taken by surprise as another group of Indians had some time before at Fort Jupiter, when General Jesup was giving the orders.

Another Indian chief, Tiger Tail, sent word that he would appear for a talk with General Armistead, but the meeting was never held. On the night of November 14, all the Indians who had gathered for the conference suddenly disappeared. The general who had been so confident of final success ordered his troops to pursue the Indians and to capture them under a flag of truce if they had to. The pursuit failed and no Indians were found.

In March, 1841, a number of Indians bearing passports signed by Colonel Worth, accompanied by a Negro interpreter, came to Fort Pierce and reported that Wild Cat had sent them and that he was ready to surrender, "if it was all right". Major Thomas Childs sent Lieutenant William Tecumseh Sherman, (who later became the famous Civil War general and coined the phrase "war is hell") with ten men, one Indian, and the interpreter to bring in the chief.

Wild Cat agreed to meet them at a military camp on the Kissimmee River. Wild Cat, then about twenty-five years old, and several other Indians arrived in camp wearing colorful garb, taken from the wardrobe of an American theatrical troupe they had attacked and killed the previous year.

The chief promised Colonel Worth that he would urge his people to consent to leave without further bloodshed. When no further word was received from him in regard to his promise, the chief was arrested at Fort Pierce and started on the journey westward. At Colonel Worth's insistence, he was brought back to Tampa before he arrived in the Territory.

The hunt continued and on March 21, 1841, a band of Tallahassee Indians numbering over 200 left Tampa Bay for New Orleans. On April 7, 205 Indians, five Negroes and another band of 200 arrived at Tampa Bay, they left on May 7, and reached New Orleans six days later.

Wild Cat and his warriors, in chains, were brought back to Tampa by boat on July 4, 1841. An interview was held aboard the ship between Colonel Worth and Wild Cat. The colonel told the chief that the whites were too strong for the Indians to resist any longer and that war must end, and that he, Wild Cat, must end it. The Colonel threatened to hang him if he did not get his band to surrender.

Wild Cat, a proud Indian, in spite of his shackles, stood up, faced the Colonel, and said:

When I was a boy, I saw the white man afar off, and was told that he was my enemy. I could not shoot him as I would a wolf or bear, yet he came upon me. My horses and fields he took from me. He said he was my friend—He gave me his hand in friendship; I took it, he had a snake in the other; his tongue was forked; he lied and stung me. I asked for but a small piece of this land, enough to plant and live on far to the south—a spot where I could place the ashes of my kindred—a place where my wife and child could live. This was not granted me. I am about to leave Florida forever and have done nothing to disgrace it. It was my home; I loved it, and to leave it is like burying my wife and child. I have thrown away my rifle and have taken the hand of the white man, and now I say take care of me!

Wild Cat was kept in chains while six of his warriors he had chosen were sent into the wilds of Florida with messages requesting that his band come in and surrender. As tears streamed down the face of this proud chief, his messengers departed. He gave one a brooch and a kerchief and said, *Give these to my wife and child.*

In ten days, six warriors, some women and children, among them Wild Cat's wife and daughter, came in. Shortly thereafter the entire band surrendered. The chief's irons were removed and he was reunited with his family.

WILD CAT AND BAND SENT WEST

As they were about to leave for the journey west, he gathered his band about him and told them that the war must end and that the white and red men were now friends. He sent messages to other chieftains still holding out, urging them to throw away their rifles and take the word of the white man. The chief and 211 of his band were sent to the Indian territory in October, 1841.

By inviting Indians to come to see him, Colonel Worth had succeeded in capturing a number of them, whom he at once sent out of Florida. For this faith-

less act, through the influence of General Scott, he was brevetted a Brigadier General.

In May, 1841, Halek Tustenugge had sent to the post of Tampa Bay, 115 sticks in a bundle, indicating that his band numbering that many people were willing to come in and surrender.

ALLIGATOR RETURNS

Alligator, Hotulke Emathla, and Waxie Emathla were employed by the government to return to Florida and use their influence to obtain more emigrants. They left by steamer from Fort Gibson by way of the Arkansas River on September 20, 1841. Each of these three Indians was permitted to take an alternate and an interpreter with him.

Several hundred Indians were finally rounded up and captured, during the fall and winter of 1841-42. General Taylor, then stationed at Fort Smith, (Arkansas), in Indian territory, estimated that by March, 1842, 2,833 Seminole Indians had been removed from Florida and relocated in the new territory.

PASCOFA SURRENDERS

Hid out in the wilds of northwest Florida were a band of Ocklocknee Indians. They were Creek Indians who fled from Alabama in 1836, and took refuge in Florida. On November 28, 1842, Colonel Ethan Allen Hitchcock received orders to operate along the Apalachicola River and find this band of Indians led by Chief Pascofa.

For over four years they had attacked settlements, burned buildings, and killed some of the settlers along the Apalachicola. Efforts to capture them had been made, but without results. They seemed to want no part of white man's civilization.

Col. Hitchcock was patient and through his messengers succeeded in bringing into his camp several members of this band of Indians. They received good treatment and soon Chief Pascofa gave up. Colonel Hitchcock sent his steamboat, the *William Gaston*, down the Apalachicola River to Apalachee Bay and ascended the Ocklocknee River thirty miles to receive the Indians. Twenty-one men, nineteen women, and ten children were in this band who surrendered. Tiger Tail and his party, as well as another Creek chief, Ochacker, and his party who had surrendered, were taken to Cedar Key. The Seminole war came to an end, and Colonel Hitchcock was credited with these last bloodless acts of inducing the Indians to surrender. The only Indians that remained in Florida were a few hundred Seminoles in the Everglades of south Florida.

The war ended in 1842, and even then the Seminoles were not completely subdued. This Seminole war was for the United States the costliest, longest, and bloodiest ever fought considering the relative numbers involved on both sides. It was one war the United States Army did not win. It did not accomplish what was intended; that is, the complete removal of all the Seminoles from Florida. True, many did go to the Indian territory, but those who stayed, even though far outnumbered, remained in possession of their freedom. They had fought for their homes, and

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

Chief Billy Bowlegs was one of the last Seminole chiefs to resist removal. About the year 1850 he was offered $215,000 to leave Florida; this he refused to consider.

their very existence against odds unmatched in American Indian history.

It would be impossible to enumerate the incidents, events, hardships and continuous fighting against odds. This is a part of the past history of the Seminole Indians since they moved into Florida about 200 years ago. From a peak population of around 5,000, they were decimated to around 200, almost ending in extermination. Had it not been for the "friendly" Everglades, there would not be a single Seminole Indian in Florida today.

This war, known as the second Seminole War, lasted nearly eight years, from 1835 to 1842. It cost the government over twenty million dollars and the lives of over 1,500 regular soldiers. This total does not take into account volunteer soldiers and civilians killed. At one time, the government had about 9,000 troops in the field, while the Seminoles could never deploy more than 1,500 warriors at any one time. The government was so desperate in its wars with the Seminoles, that Creek, Shawnee, Delaware, Kickapoo, and Choctaw Indians

were at different times recruited and sent against the Seminoles.

Many later attempts were made to bribe the Indians to leave Florida, but only a few accepted the offer. In the year 1855, surveyors in the Big Cypress Swamps came upon a Seminole village on an island. Halpatter Micco, or better known as Billy Bowlegs, was the chief of this village. The surveyors found a garden of beans, corn, pumpkins, and bananas, and took the vegetables and all the ripe fruit and destroyed the rest. The chief demanded paymnt for this outrage, but his demand was ignored.

Here, deep in the swamps, the Seminoles had sought a last refuge and still white men came to destroy. The next day the Indians attacked the surveyors, wounding the officer in charge and injuring several of the others.

From this incident there began a period of guerrilla warfare of many attacks and skirmishes. Hunters, trappers and soldiers were killed from ambush; farm houses were burned; crops were ruined; and a few Seminole villages were destroyed.

During the Seminole wars it was almost impossible to starve the Indians into submission because of an abundant game supply. Every stream, river, and lake abounded with fish. When corn, pumpkin, or squash fields were destroyed by the military, the koontie root, which grew abundantly in parts of the region, was pounded into flour (a substitute for corn meal) for bread making by the Indian women; therefore, it was almost impossible even to threaten the food supply.

Early in 1858, the government officials admitted that the Seminoles had baffled the efforts of the army to subdue them. Chief Bowlegs and his remaining warriors waged a last ditch fight against removal. They decreed that any Indian discovered communicating with white men would be put to death.

Their distrust was so great that many believed that they would be put aboard ships and taken into the Gulf of Mexico and drowned. It was beyond their understanding that the government wanted them to leave and give them new lands elsewhere on which to live.

CHIEF BOWLEGS ACCEPTS OFFER

About the year 1850, the Seminole chief Billy Bowlegs was offered $215,000 to remove his people from Florida to Indian territory. The Indians refused to consider this move. Later, in 1851, the government sent their Indian agents with instructions to pay each Indian man $800 and $450 for each woman and child. This offer fell short of its goal as only a few of them were willing to accept the offer.

Finally the government Indian agents decided to bring back a group of Seminoles from the reservation in Indian Territory to help make a peace offer to Billy Bowlegs and his sub-chiefs living in the Everglades of south Florida. The agents promised Bowlegs $6,500, each of his sub-chiefs $1,000, each Indian $500, and for every woman and child in his band, $100. One hundred sixty-five Seminoles, of which 121 were women and children, came out of the Everglades and accepted the offer. However, about 200 Seminoles flatly rejected a peace offer and withdrew undefeated into the swamps where they lived like hunted animals ready to flee at a moment's notice and ready to fight to the death. They were not molested from then on.

CHIEF SAM JONES REFUSES TO LEAVE

Among those who refused to leave was an old chief Aripeka or Sam Jones, a medicine man of the Wild Cat Clan, who was 108 years old at the time. There were only about 30 Indians left in his band. A few of his followers agreed to emigrate after he died. Many of his descendants still live in the Everglades, and many have never acknowledged allegiance to the United States.

Another war, later to be known as the American Civil War, was about to erupt farther north. It was slavery that brought it about. Whatever the other causes there were, slavery from the beginning of white man's history in this country had been a force in the events that were taking place. It was slavery —the same "nightmare"—that had plagued the Seminoles of Florida.

The Civil War came, and during the bitter struggle between the North and South, the Seminoles in Florida were forgotten. After the war, the remaining Indians were not sent west to reservations.

The history of the Seminoles parallels that of the Cherokee nation in the Great Smoky Mountains. These Indians, like many other Indian tribes, were rounded up and sent from their ancestral homes to reservations far removed from their native lands. Names such as Osceola, Coachoochee, Alligator, Tecumseh, Black Hawk, Cochise, Sitting Bull, Pontiac, and Chief Joseph are a few of the great Indian leaders in American history who will be remembered. Not one was ever a traitor to his cause, and chose death rather than side with the enemy.

Peace finally came to the Seminoles—a peace they so well deserved. They now go about their way of life, living in the past as well as the present, wishing only to be left alone.

THE SOUTHEASTERN TRIBES

Probably the greatest Indian culture in historic America was that of the "five civilized Indian tribes"—the Cherokees, Creeks, Chicksaws, Choctaws, and Seminoles. The cultural achievements set them apart from the western plains Indians, who were, for the most part, warriors and hunters after the bison herds. These five "tribes," whose ancestral home had been in the southeastern United States for untold centuries, were crowded westward by the new civilization. The forced removal of these Indians in the south and southeast from their homeland took place during the first half of the nineteenth century. After Andrew Jackson became president in 1829 and after enactment of the Indian Removal Act

of 1830, these Indians were doomed to either extinction or exile.

These Indian "tribes" had settled down to establish themselves on the soil, cultivate the land, and build homes. Several had organized a representative government, modeled after the states, and sent their children to schools and churches conducted by missionaries.

Sixty thousand Indians, members of these tribes, were forcibly dispossessed of their lands and expelled, during the decade following 1830, victims of a new order which swept them westward. They loved their hills and valleys, forests and streams, their fields and herds; they were rooted in the soil.

The great Choctaw chief, Pushmataha said in describing the ancestral home of his people: *Where we have grown up as the herbs of the woods.*

They also cherished a fierce attachment for the earth that held the bones of their ancestors and relatives. Few white people understood or respected their sentiment. The grief that overwhelmed them when they were compelled to leave forever these things they loved and cherished was a disaster that left its mark on the bravest. Adding to the desolation, family ties were broken. Here they were to start anew on the raw frontier of a new land not of their own choosing. Theirs was the tragedy of a minority group.

The Seminoles were disconsolate when they learned that they too would have to leave the homes of their childhood, their chickees, camp-fires, the fields of pumpkin and corn.

They would only take with them nostalgic memories of the morning call of the limpkin, turkey gobbler, the howl of the prowling wolf, the bark of the fox and the scream of the panther which had been sweet music. The Florida they were about to leave was the burial ground of their fathers, mothers, brothers, daughters and sons—sacred grounds soon to be desecrated by the white man and his civilization.

So it was with the Seminoles, who were soon to join these other tribes in Indian territory and become one of the five civilized tribes.

FORCED EMIGRATION

Beginning about the year 1835, the government began sending the Seminoles west and continued until 1858. At this time the Territory to which they were being sent into exile was a part of Arkansas territory, later becoming Oklahoma territory. The Indians were sent to a receiving station of the agency at Fort Gibson before being assigned to lands on which they were to live.

By June 1838, almost 2,000 Seminoles remained in camp at Fort Gibson in Indian territory. When the Seminoles heard that they were to be settled among the Creeks, they feared that the latter would overwhelm them. One Seminole chief said: *They look upon us as runaways, and would treat us just as they would so many dogs.*

In addition to full-blooded Seminoles, there were many Negro slaves who belonged to the Indians, and Negro-Seminoles resulting from mixed marriages. There were several hundred Indian half-breeds of Spanish-Seminole ancestry, called "Spanish Indians".

3000 FLORIDA SEMINOLES SENT WEST

In all about 3,000 Seminoles were sent to Indian territory during this twenty-three year period. They were settled on reservations among their old traditional enemies, the Creeks. To make matters worse, they came under the jurisdiction of the Creek Indians. They disliked the idea of being settled on a reservation, bordered by other reservations on which the nomadic western Indians were living. One group rebelled and settled on the Cherokee reservation nearby.

The leaders of this Seminole group were Coacoochee (Wild Cat), who had led them in Florida, after the death of Osceola; Alligator, (the Seminole leader at the Dade Massacre,); and a Spanish-Negro named John Cavallo.

INDIAN LEADERS GO TO WASHINGTON

In 1844, these three men went to Washington, trying to get support from the government concerning their case. Wild Cat had letters written to newspapers, begging for help; instead he received only sympathy. The three men returned to the territory and secretly organized a group of several hundred Seminoles and Negroes into a band.

A treaty was finally signed in 1845, in which the Creeks agreed to set aside a tract of land for the Seminoles. They were to govern themselves and old Chief Micanopy was selected as the chief and leader. Wild Cat, Alligator, and the Negro Cavallo seemed to be dissatisfied and made other plans.

SEMINOLE BAND GOES TO MEXICO

One night in the year 1850, these three men and their band left the reservation and went south toward Texas. After much wandering and hardship, they finally crossed the Rio Grande River near the present city of Eagle Pass, Texas, into Mexico. The Mexican government welcomed them and provided a tract of land and farming implements in the Santa Clara Mountains. After the Seminole Wars came to an end in Florida in the year 1858, many of these Seminole refugees in Mexico migrated back into the United States.

The flight to Mexico shows again the Indians' resentment of being placed on reservations without any voice in the matter whatsoever. There are descendants of these Seminoles and Seminole Negroes still living on both sides of the Rio Grande River, along the border. Wild Cat, the chieftain, died in Mexico of smallpox in 1856.

After the emigration got under way to the western country, many Seminole chiefs and leaders went with their own people. The following is an account of what happened to some on the long journey west.

Holata Emathla and his band started their westward journey on April 11, 1835. Chief Emathla died near Fort Gibson before he and his people arrived at their final destination. They had lost all their possessions, and their slaves and cattle had been stolen from them by other Indians and dishonest white men, while waiting at Tampa Bay to be taken west.

In New Territory

Otee Amathla (Jumper), and his band were first sent to New Orleans, where they were kept confined in barracks at Fort Pike with other Indian captives until transports were available to take them westward. Over 100 Indians were sick and many died during their confinement.

Chief Jumper, who had suffered for many months with tuberculosis, died April 18, 1838 at Fort Pike. He was buried according to tribal customs; in his casket was placed his tobacco, pipe, rifle, and other personal belongings. The army gave him a military burial with all the honors of war.

Old Chief King Philip died on June 7, 1838, within fifty miles of reaching his destination, Fort Gibson. He was buried with full military honors, including a salute of 100 guns over his grave on the banks of the Arkansas River.

The Civil War caused further trouble and hardships for the Seminoles who had been forced to move to the Territory. Pressure was put on their leaders from both the North and the South, and they were split into two groups.

One group led by a young Seminole, John Jumper, sided with the Confederates. The other group led by Chief Billy Bowlegs and John Chupco went over to the Union side. They had been urged to join the Confederates but refused and moved north into Kansas territory. After their arrival there, they organized the Indian Home Guard Brigade of the Union Army, Both groups fought with distinction in the Civil War, on opposite sides. John Jumper became a Colonel in the Confederate Army.

Soon after the Civil War on March 21, 1866, the chiefs in the territory signed a treaty to sell their lands of over 2,000,000 acres in the territory for fifteen cents an acre, or about $325,000. With this money they bought 200,000 acres from the Creeks for fifty cents an acre.

This treaty also rewarded those Seminoles who had fought on the Union side. Fifty thousand dollars was set aside by the Federal Government. From this, small sums were paid each year for losses the Indians had sustained during the Civil War, when they left (Oklahoma) and moved to Kansas territory.

Later, using tribal funds, the Seminoles bought 175,000 acres of additional land from the Creeks at one dollar an acre.

The Seminoles who had joined and aided the Confederates did not receive anything for damages done to their lands and homes.

The Seminole Nation was established in 1868 with their capital at Wewoka, Oklahoma. They elected a chief by a majority vote and had a subchief. Their council consisted of forty-two men. In the Seminole nation there were fourteen towns or tribal groups, twelve being Seminole and two of Negroes who had been freed. Their newly elected chief, John F. Brown, governed them for over thirty peaceful years.

Each town sent three representatives to the national council. They had Seminole policemen called "the lighthorse men" who did such a fine job that the Seminole soon became known as the most law-abiding Indian Nation in the territory.

By 1923, only one-fifth of their original land holdings remained in Seminole hands.

The Indians were ignorant of land or money values and also unaware of the responsibility of land ownership. They were soon swindled out of their holdings by crooked land speculators. It has been often said that they were subjected to the greatest frauds—*ever perpetrated on mankind,*—land stealing from the Indians in the new Territory was the order of the day.

Today the Seminoles of Oklahoma are citizens of the United States. The Seminole children living in Oklahoma have the same advantages of education as white people. Many present day Seminoles are farmers, teachers, doctors, lawyers, ranchers and civic leaders. Their present tribal council consists of a chief and thirty-six members who still meet at Wewoka. The council serves as adviser to the United States Indian Office on matters concerning the welfare of their people.

HISTORY OF FORT MARION

CASTLE SAN MARCOS—

Near St. Augustine, overlooking Matanzas Bay stands historic Castle San Marcos, oldest fort in the United States. Construction of the quadrangular, four-bastioned, moated stronghold was begun in 1672 and not completed until eighty-four years later in 1756. This fort, built of heavy stone blocks, was erected by Indian hostages, Negro slaves, soldiers and inhabitants of St. Augustine at a cost of millions of dollars.

The Spanish lost Florida to the English in 1763. Under the British it was renamed Fort St. Marks. In 1784 it came back into Spanish possession and the old original name was restored, but in 1825 after Florida became United States territory, it was renamed Fort Marion in honor of General Francis Marion, Revolutionary war patriot of South Carolina.

During the Seminole wars this fort was used as a prison where many Indian chiefs and leaders were held as hostages, including Osceola, Coacoochee (Wild Cat) and Micanopy. This fort was proclaimed a National Monument in 1924 and is under the administration of the National Park Service.

Unconquered Seminoles

PART THREE

PRESENT DAY SEMINOLES

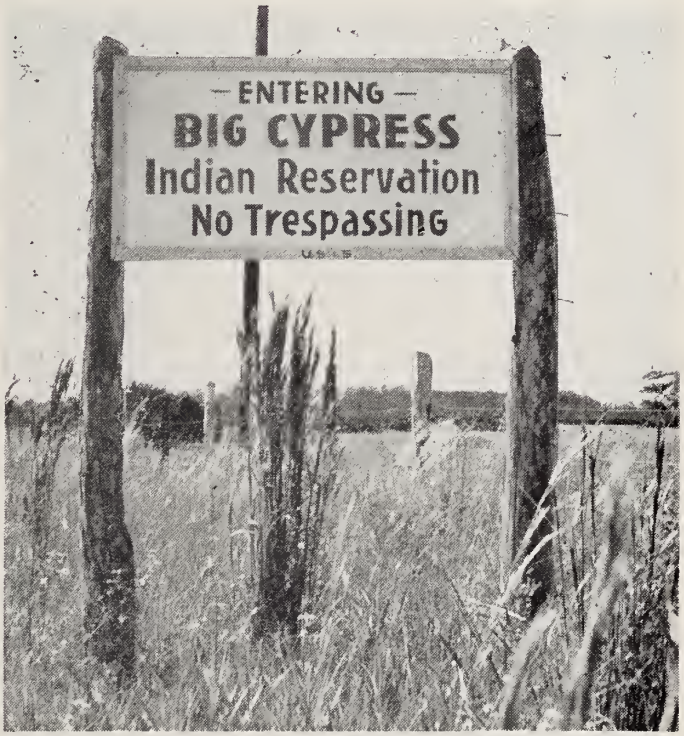
Florida's Seminole Indians are the descendants of the few hundred "unconquerables" who refused to move westward after the Seminole wars during the nineteenth century. These Indians, dispersed throughout the southern part of the Floridian peninsula, remain a withdrawn element in the dominant White-Negro population of the state.

During the Seminole wars, the Hitchiti-speaking Seminoles furnished most of the campaign leaders, but warriors of the Muskogee tongue were more numerous. A large group of the Hitchiti, who became known as the Mikasuki, were irrevocably pledged to enmity toward the white man. When the wars were over, those that survived fled into the fastness of the Everglades and took refuge there, while most of the Muskogees allowed themselves to be sent to Fort Gibson in the western territory, where they were resettled on reservations.

The Mikasukis are by tradition hunters and fishermen, while the Muskogees are known as tillers of the soil and raisers of domesticated animals. Though the latter group did hunt and fish, they have always been more settled and peaceful. The Mikasukis consider themselves superior to the Muskogees, an attitude that seems to have come about because of the differences in their means of livelihood.

Two-thirds of the present-day Indians (of which there are more than 1,000 in Florida) are Mikasukis. They alone of all Indian tribes in the United States can say: "We did not bow to the will of the White Man; We are unconquered; We signed no peace treaty." Today these proud people who would not admit defeat, live in isolated areas and along the desolate reaches of the Tamiami Trail or on the Big Cypress Reservation in the Everglades of Southern Florida.

There are many separate groups of Seminoles living in Florida today. The largest concentration of them live on government-owned reservations, named Big Cypress, Brighton, and Dania. Others live in scattered areas and at tourist attractions that feature alligator wrestling and Indian handicraft. Thus, the extent of governmental assistance they receive is chiefly limited to help in relocating them on government lands, the loan of beef cattle for breeding stock, counsel in their cattle-raising ventures, education of their children and medical attention for all those who ask for it.



IRVIN M. PEITHMANN

This sign, about 35 miles south of Clewiston, is seldom seen by the tourist, due to its isolated location. The Big Cypress Indian Reservation borders on the northern edge of the Big Cypress Swamp.

Southwest of Clewiston is an area known as the Devil's Garden. Bordering to the south is the

Big Cypress

IRVIN M. PEITHMANN

About 1500 head of Indian-owned cattle graze over a part of the 42,600 acres of land at Big Cypress Indian Reservation.

Big Cypress Swamp. The largest of the Indian reservations in Florida derives its name from this swamp.

Big Cypress Reservation is over nıty miles from the nearest town, Clewiston. Approximately 350 Mikasuki Indians live on this reservation of 42,600 acres in Hendry County. The terrain is such that the land is not well suited to cultivation or grazing of livestock. However the Indian families tend small gardens and raise cattle, pigs, and chickens. About 1,500 head of cattle and hogs owned by them range over the poor land, which is mostly a cypress-forested swampland. Men eke out the precarious family livelihood with work on road gangs, in logging camps, or at such seasonal jobs as may be available. However, the Mikasukis, who have accepted life on a reservation, are far from satisfied with their lot. Their common plea is for good land that they can call their own because their reservation in the Big Cypress Swamp does not have soil suited to the prosperous cultivation of crops and the raising of cattle.

Big Cypress has been called the wildest, most primitive swamp in North America. It is said to boast a higher mosquito population per square yard than any other spot in the world. Despite the dreary environs, the Indians are on the whole healthy, happy, and well-acclimated to existence in the

IRVIN M. PEITHMANN

About 3500 cattle owned by the Indians graze on this sandy pasture land at Brighton Reservation.

Brighton Reservation

IRVIN M. PEITHMANN

Jimmy Cypress, a typical Indian cowboy, at Big Cypress Indian Reservation. These cowboys are hired by cattle men to look after their herds.

desolate swamp-land. It is doubtful that they could be so happy or healthy elsewhere.

The most notable modern convenience that has come to the Indians from the government is electricity which is brought in on specially constructed lines. Electric lights in the chickee* are now a customary luxury; some Indians have even added electrical appliances to their accommodations. The Indian women are recognizing the advantages of electric sewing machines with which they can speed up production of dolls and dresses for the tourist trade.

Education is not compulsory, but those who attend school, whether child or adult, go to schools run under the auspices of the United States Government. A modern frame schoolhouse has been built at Big Cypress, where the Indian children are learning reading, writing, and arithmetic as in the public schools of the United States. A teacher and his family live on the reservation. While he teaches the children the ways of civilization, he makes a particular effort to keep alive their unique culture and crafts.

In July 1956, Frank Wood, the teacher, resigned and the school has been temporarily closed. Fourteen children from this reservation and Dania are now attending the Sequoia vocational school at Tahlequah, Oklahoma.

The Cow Creeks, or Muskogee Seminoles, live on the Brighton Reservation. Containing 36,724 acres of prairie, hammock, and swampland, it is a few miles northwest of Lake Okeechobee in Highland and Glades Counties. Approximately 250 Cow Creek and a few Mikasuki Seminoles live on this tract of land.

ST. PETERSBURG TIMES

The Indians are beginning to take advantage of the educational facilities now offered them. Many Seminole children attend public schools.

Agriculture on a full commercial scale cannot be accomplished by the Seminoles since the lands on which they live are not suited to successful cultivation. The land on reservations is either forest area or sandy swampland that has been drained and is usable only for grazing.

Under the guidance of a trained government agent* and his staff, the Cow Creek Seminoles of the Brighton Reservation are now cattle ranchers.

IRVIN M. PEITHMANN

Little Indian Girls Playing "Button, Button who's got the Button" at Brighton Reservation.

Chickee is the Indian name for their dwelling.

Fred Montsdeoca, assitant extension agent, Moore Haven, works with the Indians in cattle raising projects: He was one of the first to help the Seminoles get started in cattle raising.

Approximately 3,500 cattle and hogs owned by the Indians range over this tract of land.

An Indian desiring to engage in cattle ranching borrows breeding stock from the government. With these, he starts a herd of his own. A few years later, he is expected to repay the loan with cattle of equal value from his new herd.

Since these Indians possess no land of their own, they graze their stock on government tracts. Livestock associations help them raise and sell their cattle. Like their white neighbors, they now have Brahman stock, as well as a hybrid variety of Brahman extraction which is well adapted to the climate.

Young Indian men have taken to the ways of the traditional cowboy; that is, they wear blue jeans, broadbrimmed felt hats and boots. They take great pride in their cowponies, grooming and tending them with meticulous care. This community of Seminoles is taking readily to the white man's way of life; their children are being educated in the public schools, riding the modern school bus to and from the reservation to nearby Okeechobee.

The school building at the Brighton reservation is now being used as headquarters for the Seminole Crafts Guild. The Indians bring their handicraft consisting of dresses, jackets, dolls and other items to this craft center where it is for sale to the public.

A smaller settlement of Mikasuki is located near Dania, in Broward County, about twenty miles north of Miami. This reservation, the smallest of the three in Florida, contains only 429 acres, the land of which does not differ materially from that of the Big Cypress and Brighton Reservations.

Indians living along the Tamiami Trail are also Mikasukis who have moved to, and built their villages and camps along this modern highway. In roadside stands and concessions, they display their handicraft products—dolls, handbags, beautifully designed jackets, capes, dresses—all for sale to tourists.

A considerable number of the young Indian men are now employed on nearby vegetable farms, in logging camps, on road maintenance, or with surveying crews. Women stay in the village, busy with their craft of dressmaking, disposing of their wares through established traders and store owners in the area. Younger Indian boys earn money hunting frogs which are in demand at the larger markets of Miami.

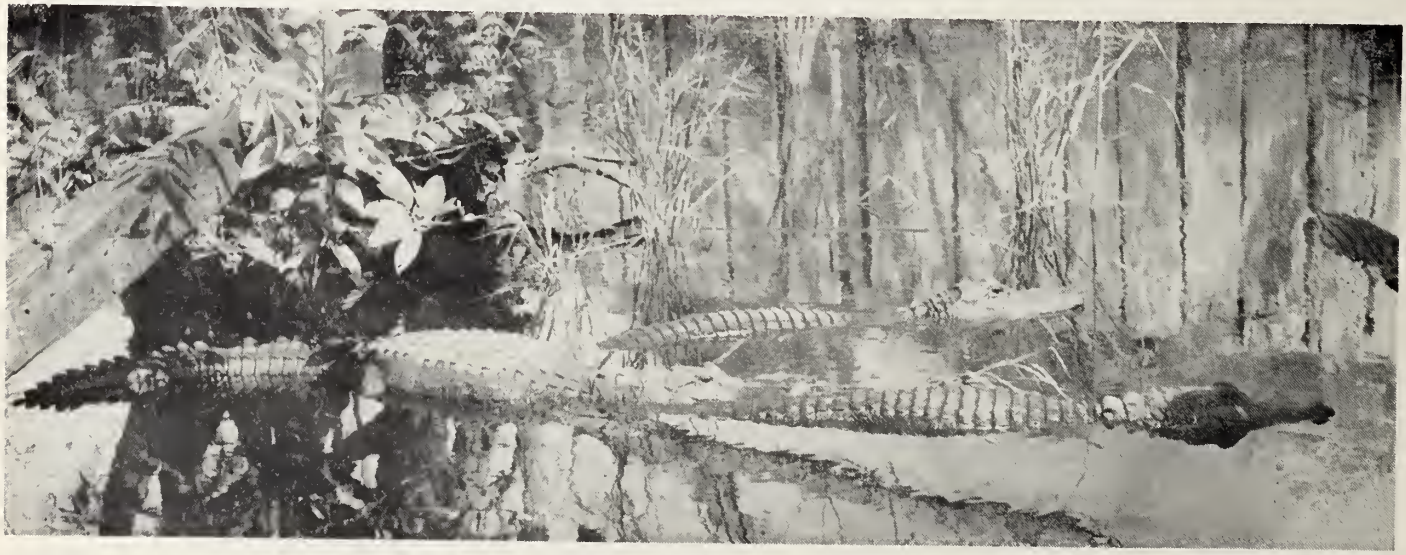
Although the families subsist partially on game and wildlife, they supplement their "natural" diet with "white man's food" from the markets.

Almost every native camp along the Tamiami Trail is a sight-seeing concession where, for an admission fee, the tourist may enter and inspect the village. As an added attraction, a high-walled pen of alligators is shown nearby. Permission will usually be granted for taking snapshots, but generally the Indians remain aloof from the visitors. Reserved and quiet, they speak only when directly addressed. Only after many, many visits could a white man expect to win their confidence and friendship.

A few of the Seminole families own land, and this has occurred in recent years. For the most part, Seminoles along the Trail are squatters, literally and legally. They are subject to eviction any time at the whim of the landowner, but the nature of the property is such that few owners have evoked such rights.

Many other Indians live in isolated camps in the Everglades, far removed from the highways. These Mikasuki Indians have less contact with the outside but do visit with other clan members, living on the reservations and along the Tamiami Trail.

Seminoles receive no government dole. When in distress, they sometimes accept aid from the missionaries. Those living along the Tamiami Trail disdained government aid when they resisted efforts



IRVIN M. PEITHMANN

Many of the Indian camps and villages along the Tamiami Trail have pens of alligators, which they keep as a tourist attraction. Alligator wrestling exhibitions, for which the Seminole boys are famous, are generally confined to the larger Indian concessions near Miami.

Government Agents

CHARLES BELDEN

While the children play, this Seminole family entertains their relatives and neighbors in their camp, near the Tamiami Trail. Many of the relatives live miles away. In former years it took several days to make the journey by boat or on foot to visit the camp or village of relatives.

to settle them on reservations. Quietly independent by nature, they prefer to be left alone, to pursue their own way of life. Land grants would be the answer to the problem of this particular group. They are, however, aware that there is no land in southern Florida on which they might expect to make a good living by farming. They might accept a cash grant IF there were no stipulations on the use of the money and if it could be administered by the Seminoles themselves.

The Florida Seminoles appear to be living congenial lives—they accept or refuse the advantages offered by the government as they please. Many are learning new ways while others retain their old habits. Even today the essential spirit of the Seminole, especially the Mikasuki, remains almost completely untouched by concepts foreign to them, such as education.

The entire attitude of the Seminoles toward government help is far different from that of most Indian tribes in the United States. Some western tribes receive assistance from funds growing out of reimbursements by the government for land the Indians originally controlled. No such funds are available to the Seminoles since they were never indemnified for the territories they once claimed.

On the night of May 25, 1938, a delegation of Seminole Indians met with agents of the United States Government. This was a particularly significant meeting for it was the first voluntary recognition these Indians had accorded the United States since termination of the last Seminole uprising almost ninety years before.

At the meeting, the late Richard Osceola, spokesman for some eighty Seminoles of the Cow Creek branch, told the agents of the needs of his people, needs that included schools, hospitals, community buildings, better beef stock, and better horses on which to ride herd. Although the government had made many overtures toward peaceful

Seminole Agency

IRVIN M. PEITHMANN

Cory Osceola's gift shop is a typical Indian concession along the Tamiami Trail south of Fort Myers.

relations with the Indians since 1851, all attempts had met with utter indifference. Now at last it appeared that the Seminoles realized they had to compromise with civilization and seek out new ways of making a living if their race was to survive and prosper.

In the old days, the Indians regarded the land along the east coast of Florida as belonging to the white man, while the interior (Everglades) was considered their own. In this formidable swamp region, all natural resources were at hand for the necessities of life. Trees and vegetation provided the materials from which to fabricate their chickees. Food in abundance was there for the effort of hunting and fishing. Traders bought the skins of the animals they trapped. A few vegetables—corn sweet potatoes, beans, and melons—could be grown with simple methods. Then came the highway, and a great part of the Everglades was drained to facilitate construction. The consequent intrusion of tourists over the Tamiami Trail destroyed the sanctuary of the Seminoles.

Florida Indians are under the jurisdiction of the Florida Seminole Agency. In turn, this agency is supervised by the headquarters of Seminole Affairs at Muskogee, Oklahoma. All Indian agencies in the country are under the direction of the Office of Indian Affairs, United States Department of the Interior.

The activities of the Indian Agency in Florida are somewhat handicapped by the fact that seasonally, as many as half of the Seminoles do not live on reservations but are scattered in independent camps along the Tamiami Trail. Despite the difficulties, the agency is doing a remarkable job in assisting Indians to find suitable employment. On the reservations, the Indian agents offer assistance and counsel on cattle raising projects. The educational program at present is simply to encourage Indian children of suitable age to enroll in public schools.

William D. Boehmer, educational field agent for the Florida Seminoles, works under the direction of

ST. PETERSBURG TIMES

The white men and the Indians finally have come to a mutual understanding of the present day problems facing the Seminoles in Florida.

IRVIN M. PEITHMANN

An Indian woman weaving baskets at the Big Cypress Reservation. This long lost art is being revived, among the Seminoles.

IRVIN M. PEITHMANN

Far over a hundred miles along the Tamiami Trail these Indian camps and concessions are about the only visible evidence of human habitation.

Aid to Indians

RUBE ALLYN

This Seminole Indian camp near the canal is a familiar sight as one travels over the Tamiami Trail from Fort Myers to Miami. The Indian women are busy with their daily household tasks of sewing and preparing food for their families. The menfolk are generally absent.

the Department of Interior, of which the Seminole Agency at Dania is the headquarters in Florida. in Florida.

A census report from the agency at Dania, dated July 1, 1956, showed that 975 Seminole Indians were enrolled, of which 700 were living on reservations. This report represented Indians belonging to the two groups in Florida, the Mikasuki and the Muskogees or Cow Creek Band.

A total of 155 Seminole children were enrolled in public schools, 40 were attending Federal schools and 25 were enrolled in other schools. A total of 82 children were not attending any school.

In addition to the churches and their missionary work among the Seminoles, there are two non-government organizations engaged in helping them: The friends of the Seminoles, Florida Founda-

RUBE ALLYN

Pauline and Jeanie Poole sewing bright-colored materials into patterned strips. These are made into dresses and jackets for the tourist trade along the Tamiami Trail.

IRVIN M. PEITHMANN

Ingraham Billy, a medicine man, and his family pose for the author at their village near the Tamiami Trail.

Seminole Friends

IRVIN M. PEITHMANN

A part of the large herds of beef cattle owned by the Indians at Brighton Reservation near Okeechobee.

tion, Inc.; and the Seminole Indian Association of Florida.

The Friends of the Seminole, Florida Federation, Inc., is active in promoting the social, educational, physical, and economic welfare; in general, they endeavor to advance the interests of the Seminoles in Florida. Part of their program sponsors and subsidizes a kindergarten for Seminole Children at the Agency. It also cooperates in furthering the program and plans of the United States Government concerning the Indians.

During the year 1956, six Seminole Indian families moved from their native chickees into new American-type homes. The project was sponsored by "Friends of the Seminoles", assisted by members of Broward County home demonstration clubs. This home improvement program now underway is to assist Indian housewives in modern housekeeping practices.

IRVIN M. PEITHMANN

A typical Brahman bull used by the Indians to improve their native beef herds. The crossing of Brahman stock with native cattle has produced animals adapted to the climate of this region.

L. L. COOK COMPANY

These Seminole Indian cattlemen display the individual branding irons used in branding their cattle. Since approximately 3500 head of cattle graze over the 36,724 acres of land on Brighton Reservation, they must be branded for identification at roundup time.

Culture, Customs

IRVIN M. PEITHMANN

A few of the younger generation of Seminoles are beginning to abandon their traditional thatch-covered chickees for modern frame dwellings. Members of County Home Demonstration Clubs are assisting the Indian housewives in modern housekeeping practices.

The Seminole Indian Association of Florida was established by A. Stanley Hanson of Fort Myers, Florida, in 1915. The purpose of this organization is simply to help in any way possible. The association is alert to oppose any proposed legislation that may be detrimental to the Indians, such as abridgment of their preferred hunting rights. They will fight any encroachment on Indian lands.

The word culture sometimes refers to the artistic and intellectual activities of the social community in which one lives. In a broader sense, culture includes every phase of daily living. However, warfare, migration, environment, climatic conditions, or a combination of these factors has been known to change radically the culture of a group. Such is the case of the Floridian Seminoles. From the time of their migration into Florida more than two centuries ago, circumstances have conspired to change their way of life.

About a hundred years after their migration,

IRVIN M. PEITHMANN

The Seminole cattlemen, who own herds of cattle at the Big Cypress Indian Reservation, bring their livestock to these cattle pens to be weighed and shipped to market. The Indian cattle raisers know the value of good beef, and are striving to improve their cattle herds.

Cultural Changes

IRVIN M. PEITHMANN

Indians living along the Tamiami Trail.

when they were forced to flee south into the depths of the Everglades, the climatic environs were different from those of their ancestors who had lived in a region farther north subject to seasonal changes. In this new, almost tropical setting, they found that travel was almost impossible except by boat. Necessity forced them to make and use dugout canoes, hewed from large trunks of cypress trees, as the only mode of transportation. As they continued to dwell in the Everglades, they developed hunting and fishing skills adapted to their existence in the new location.

Thatch-covered houses without walls were ingeniously designed for functional considerations in the new climate. These chickees were always located on high ground (hammocks) in the swamp. Thus, they were protected somewhat from the dampness of the region, and their open-sided houses were able to withstand the onslaughts of hurricanes, since they presented little resistance to the raging winds.

Many examples of this primitive construction may be seen along the Tamiami Trail as one travels between Naples and Miami Many of the villages are open for inspection of visitors. They are

IRVIN M. PEITHMANN

The camp of Billy Bowlegs, III, sheltered among moss-covered trees at Brighton Reservation.

just as primitive today as they were 100 years ago, with the exception of iron pots and the sewing machine which is the only white man's mechanical device the Seminoles have adopted. The village life is well worth anyone's time to stop and examine. Many of the villages have displays of beautiful handicraft for sale.

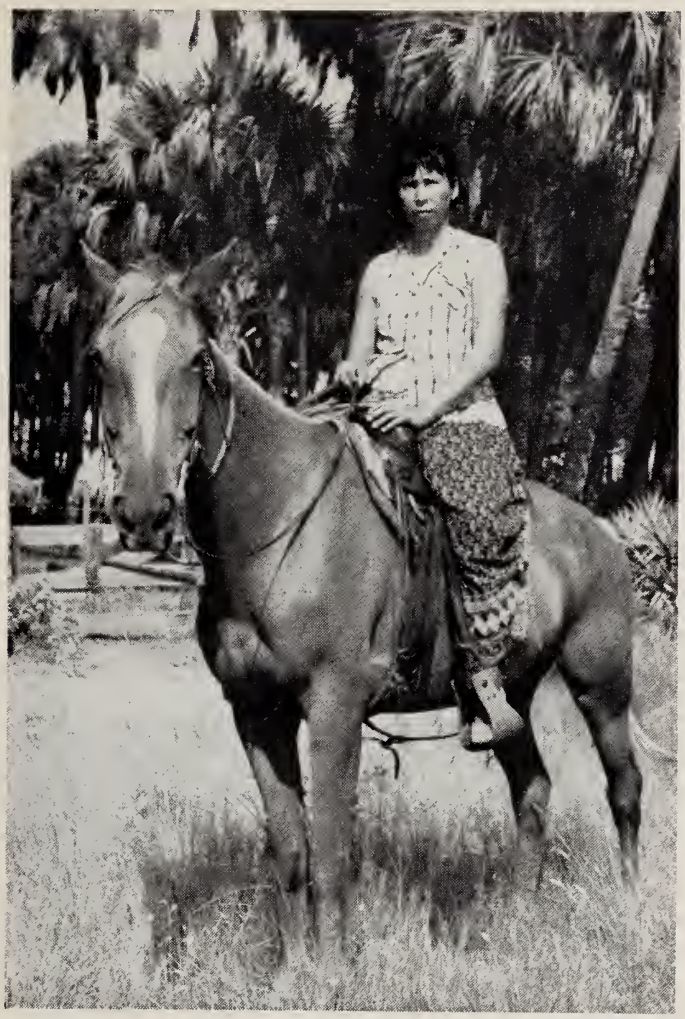
When the Seminoles lived in northern Florida, they built log cabins similar to those constructed by the early pioneers. These cabins were of the same type as those in which Creek Indians dwelt in Georgia and Alabama, before being driven out by white men.

RUBE ALLYN

This Seminole Indian family with their household goods, glide through the swampland to a new location. The Indians have used the dugout canoe for many generations to travel, haul produce, hunt, and fish in the vast expanse of the Everglades.

Seminole Chickee

The present-day Seminole hut, or chickee, must have evolved after the tribe was forced to retreat into the swampland to escape the harrassment of military forces. The formidable Everglades became a haven of refuge from the white man's oppressions. In this vast area, the chickee was easy to build. Its framework, including rafters, was of poles cut from small trees. Overlapping palmetto palm fronds provided a roof similar to, and almost as effective as, our modern shingle roofs. Seminoles still prefer this thatched roof shelter devised by their forefathers who came to the Everglades more than a century ago to escape injustices from the white man.



IRVIN M. PEITHMANN

Arlene John displays remarkable poise as she rides her horse at Brighton Reservation.

DEACONESS BEDELL

Deaconess Bedell, Episcopalian missionary, visits the camp of the late Miami Billy (third from left).

IRVIN M. PEITHMANN

The long stretch of the Tamiami Trail between Naples and Collier-Seminole State Park.

L. L. COOK COMPANY

Frank Willie, his family and guests, enjoy their meal somewhere in the swamps about 35 years ago.

Children

DEACONESS BEDELL

One of the outstanding characteristics of the Seminoles, especially the women, is their fondness for colorful costumes. The dresses these young women and children are wearing are typical of their everyday dress. They wear these clothes while engaged in their work of dressmaking.

Seminoles along the Tamiami Trail, who are in daily contact with tourists, will often appear even less friendly than their tribal brothers on the reservations. Many seem indifferent to strangers. They either withdraw, or say nothing. At all times, they maintain a manner of dignity and self-respect. Such apparently anti-social traits may well be the outgrowth of the isolated manner in which they have lived. Florida Seminoles, perhaps more than any other living American Indian tribe, have down through the generations, nurtured the bitter memories of war. Many still retain considerable rancor toward white men. Old feuds die slowly and seldom fade into oblivion.

The present day children are quiet and often seem subdued. When they are away from strangers however, their manner is as playful and cheerful as any other group.

The Seminole women still hand down tales of terrible hardships their ancestors endured during the Seminole wars. In those unforgotten days, the Indian mothers fled with their children to the hammocks deep in the Everglades, and dug pits in the earth in which the small Indian children were hidden. Palmetto leaves covered them from the hot sun and hid them from the soldiers. The mothers, hiding nearby, came in the night and fed them. Near the end of the Seminole wars, over a hundred years ago, very few children between the ages of three and fourteen were found among the bands of Seminoles that surrended or were captured. Many observers believe that small children had been killed rather than allow their cries to betray their hiding places in the swamps.

BOB BECKER

Two Seminole boys dressed in their brightly-colored jackets. (From a photo taken about 20 years ago.)

Language

IRVIN M. PEITHMANN

Doctor John, in the old Seminole tradition, covers the roof of his chickee with palmetto fronds, gathered nearby.

It is surprising that they have admirable poise, instinctive grace, and natural self-assurance to a greater degree than more cultivated people. Perhaps this is logically attributable to generations of life in a small, closely integrated society.

Two different versions of the native tongue are still spoken among the Florida Seminoles. Although the traits and culture of the two language groups are almost identical, their speech differs completely.

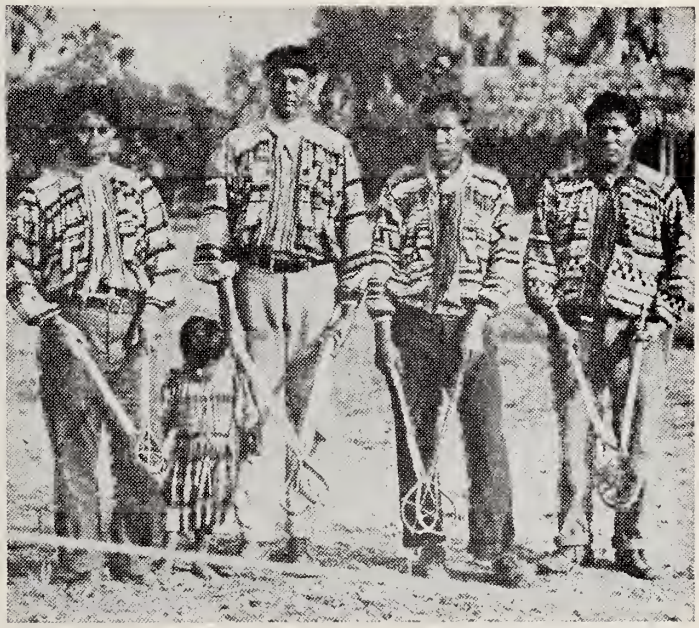
Like the Seminoles of Oklahoma, those living on the Brighton Reservation, northwest of Lake Okeechobee, speak in the Muskogee tongue. But Indians of the Big Cypress and Dania Reservations and those living along the Tamiami Trail speak a dialect of Hitchiti, sometimes called Mikasuki. The dialects are so different that Seminoles trying to converse in the two cannot understand each other. A Cow Creek Seminole is able to talk with a Creek Indian from Oklahoma, because both speak Muskogee.

MAX NORRIS

Seminole women, at Brighton Indian Reservation, gather around the chickee fireplace to visit and eat their lunch.

Until a few years ago, Seminoles made no attempt to learn the white man's language or ways because their only contact with the outside civilization was through trade and barter. Today, only a few of the older Seminoles can read or write; however, many speak English with remarkable fluency. Others speak some scant English, usually enough to understand conversations they hear. Many of these pretend in the presence of strangers to have no knowledge of the language whatsoever, presumably because they do not wish to answer questions. Their voices are low—almost a whisper—when they talk among themselves, and they seldom supplement their words with gestures.

Among the Mikasukis, the women are forbidden by tribal order to converse with white men, but this aspect, too, is changing as they come more and more in contact with the outside world. Almost every Florida Seminole now speaks some English. The women, though forbidden to converse freely with white men, are now learning the language from their children and menfolk. At the same time their native dialect is being enriched by new words created to designate such objects as radios, television, movies, phonographs, automobiles, airplanes, and similar modern inventions.



ST. PETERSBURG TIMES

For generations, the Indian stick ball game has been a favorite sport of the Seminoles.

Tribal welfare is the first concern of Seminole society. Moral integrity, individual initiative, and fair play all are basic standards for conduct. No one Indian ever seeks to dominate or to excel. In a form of self-government that is purely democratic, the entire group always has a voice in decisions affecting the body. Once an agreement has

Seminole Games

been reached they generally work together with little evidence of dissent.

The Seminoles' dislike for conflict is evident in all their activities; competition and rivalry do not enter into their everyday life. While in the white man's society, politics and sports are intensely—sometimes bitterly—competitive, the Seminole thinks of his opponent as a fellow player, someone to be assisted. The more effectively the Indian can help his adversary, the better the sportsmanship with its consequent reward in satisfaction.

All of their games are non-competitive. Even the white man's game, Chinese Checkers, now played by the Indians, becomes a pastime in which players encourage and assist each other to make more advantageous moves. The Indian stick ball game is played not for the satisfaction of winning but rather as an exercise in unselfish sportsmanship.

The present culture of the Seminoles obviously developed after their contacts with white men.

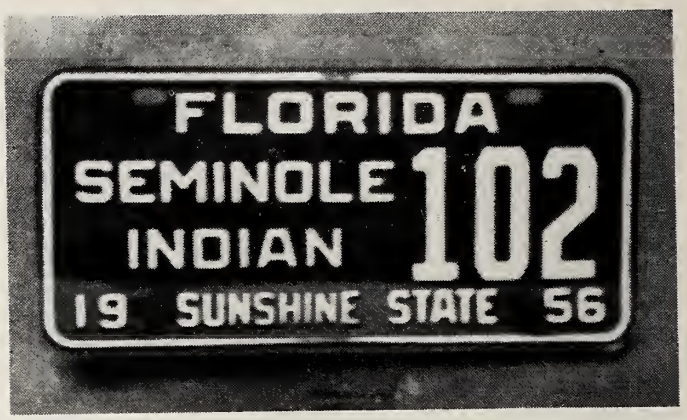
DEACONESS BEDELL

These Seminole men are on a dangerous hunt. Capturing alligators alive, is a profession for some of the younger Indians.

Weapons of the hunt—bow and arrows, spears, harpoons—were doubtlessly developed for use long before white men appeared on the scene, but later they began using the more efficient firearms introduced by the white men. Slowly they have adopted other modern machines and tools of our civilization. Dugout canoes are sometimes abandoned in favor of outboard-powered, commercially built boats. Even a few boats driven by an airplane propeller are owned by the Indians.

As soon as they become aware of their availability, they began to use the older types of sewing machines both hand cranked and treadle driven models. Many old machines are still in service, although now, where electricity is available, the motorized machines are becoming popular with Indian women. Hand stitching is almost unknown in the dressmaking craft; almost every seamstress has a machine of one type or another.

Nevertheless, it is evident from their houses and costumes that they still cling doggedly to many



IRVIN M. PEITHMANN

License plates are furnished free by the State of Florida to the Seminole Indians who drive automobiles.

of their ancient customs. While the women use electric sewing machines, they still do hand laundry on the banks of the canals, spreading the washed clothing over low bushes to dry.

Their day by day life is an amusing study in anachronisms. Young men who sleep in primitive chickees at night will arise the next morning to drive a sleek modern automobile to work.

They, like their white neighbors, have learned of the pay-as-you-drive plan. The State of Florida furnishes free license plates to each owner of an automobile or truck. These licenses are distinguished from others by the wording in large letters —Seminole Indian.

Many of the aboriginal arts known to the Seminoles' ancestors must have been lost through disuse during their Everglades exile. Pottery-making, weaving, leather craft, and the art of log-house construction are no longer skills of the Indians.

In comparison to the other North American Indian tribes, however, there is probably none whose culture and customs have been so well perpetuated as those of the Mikasukis. Essentially they live much in the same manner as their forefathers did a century ago.

IRVIN M. PEITHMANN

Indian children, on Brighton Reservation, doing their laundry on a log in the age-old tradition of the Seminoles.

KURT SEVERIN

Ankle-length dresses remain in style among the women. One of the most outstanding characteristics of the Seminoles is their fondness for colorful costumes. Little children like to dress and act like their elders.

The chickee home has undergone practically no modification. The Seminoles still take their nightly repose on a platform about three feet above ground level. The elevated sleeping platform still serves the same two practical purposes their ancestors had in mind: protection from the dampness of the swamp and a safeguard against snakes. By day, bedding is rolled and laid aside, and the platform of the chickee becomes a dressmaking shop. They still use palmetto leaves to shelter themselves. The thatched roof projects at the sides to keep off the driving rains peculiar to the region in the wet season.

Centrally located in each village, a larger chickee serves as a community kitchen. Here all the families prepare their meals together. An open fire burns beneath an iron grill on which cooking utensils rest. Five or more logs radiate out from the flame at the center and are fed into the fire as needed. An observer once said, *The Seminole Indian makes the best campfire I have ever seen.*

When the meal is ready, the hot food is taken to the platforms of the family chickees, still in the vessel in which it was cooked. Formerly, one large wooden spoon was passed around the family circle for each member to dip into the large pot. Now, individual dishes and spoons are coming into favor.

IRVIN M. PEITHMANN

The pigs and chickens roam at will through the villages. This is tolerated because they serve only one purpose—food.

Foods

KURT SEVERIN

A lonely old woman, deep in thought, patiently sits by her fire-place while the contents of the pots slowly simmer over the fire. In the Seminole society the old people are highly respected. They are usually healthy, strong and keep active by taking care of garden plots and gathering wood.

Until recently, the Seminoles pounded their corn in the primitive manner once used by all American Indians. The grinder was simply a section of a large log, set on end with a hollow fashioned in the top to hold the shelled corn. Then it was pulverized by dropping a heavy wooden pestle onto the corn. While this crude method may still be used in the remote regions, most of the Seminoles, with outside world contacts, use conventional hand-cranked corn grinders. From the grits thus resulting, they boil meal into a thin porridge called *sofkee,* which the natives relish.

Wild game is scarcer now than in the old days because of the intrusion of white hunters. But racoon, opossum, deer, rabbit, turtle, and many varieties of fish are still available to the Indian. As in the case of many native peoples, fish and turtles are favorite foods and have always been a part of their diet. The large "gopher," or land turtle is considered a delicacy among the Indians as well as the whites.

The Seminoles also garden on a small scale, cultivating corn, sweet potatoes, squash, pumpkin, bananas, sugar cane, guavas, melons, citrus fruits, and cabbage palm. Many other edible fruits grow wild in the area. New varieties of vegetables are planted as they learn to like them. Bees are kept by some Indians, and almost every family has a few chickens. In spite of these few innovations and changes, they still remain, in large measure, creatures of habit and children of nature.

When the Seminoles first arrived in Florida over two hundred years ago, they wore the traditional leather or buckskin clothing. Soon they found that this type of clothing was too warm for wearing in a hot, sometimes humid climate. From traders they acquired porous fabrics which could be made into loose-fitting garments. It would seem that the Seminole would need very little clothing in this subtropical region; however, bothersome insects (mosquitoes in particular) make it necessary to wear clothing covering most of the body.

Records of early observers indicate that the clothing styles for both the men and the women changed through the years. At first their cloth garments were made into long length skirts and long sleeved blouses. The women wore tier upon tier of strung beads around their necks. The men's garment at this time consisted of a smock-like cloth shirt which extended to just above the knees and buckskin leggings which covered their legs.

Mrs. Charlie Jumper

HANK COHEN

Mrs. Charlie Jumper (Pau-ha-akee) wears her many strands of colored glass beads with proud dignity. She would not consider herself well dessed without her beads, eardrops hairnet and cape. The lines of character etched deep, bespeak the hardships of earlier years.

Clothing

L. L. COOK COMPANY

Chorlie Tiger Tail visits Ted Smollwood ot Chokaloskee, Florido in 1928. Fifty yeors ago, Smollwood's store was a troding center for many Seminole Indians living in the Everglades, and on the nearby Ten Thousond Islands.

L. L. COOK COMPANY

An eorly photogroph of Chorlie Tiger Toil. About the yeor 1900, due to white contact, the Indions begon to use white mon's apporel along with their tribol costumes.

By the 1880's, the Seminoles were wearing clothing of calico, gingham, cotton, and sometimes flannel. The men wore either stripe or figured cloth costumes with beaded belts or cloth sashes around the waist. Two or more bandanas were worn around the neck, and a cloth turban on the head. If one judges from early photographs, he can believe the clothing was ornamented with braids and stripes and sometimes strips of colored cloth. Cloth patterned in geometric designs was sewed to the lower part of the women's skirts and around the lower part of the men's knee-length tunics. One of the outstanding characteristics of the Seminoles, especially the women, is their fondness for colorful costumes.

Coiffure fads for women changed from time to time. At one period a knot of hair atop the head was favored. Later, pompadour and bangs were in vogue. The hair was sometimes combed over a frame extending over one side of the face. Flowing women's dresses and pompadour hair-dos, still worn by some of the older Seminole women, were adapted from the Gibson Girl costume of the 1890's. Indian women copied it from pictures on calendars of that period.

There is no indication that the sewing machine was used before the year 1900. Shortly thereafter, the Seminole women began to use the hand-cranked machines which they obtained from traders. Later, the treadle type machine replaced the hand-cranked type.

With the coming of the sewing machine, dress styles again changed. The braid and print designs formerly sewed on by hand began to disappear. Designs became more delicate and intricate. They were assembled in long strips and then inserted into the garment as a separate band. The mechanical sewing machine made this patchwork possible. Within the past few decades, styles in clothing have changed still more. The ruffled capes formerly worn by the women have been replaced by silk and nylon materials.

The older men in some instances, still wear a one piece kilt-like dress with rows in different colors. Now most of the young men and boys wear "store-bought" trousers with a brightly colored blouse made by the women and the kerchief around the neck. The older men and women go bareheaded

Old Customs

IRVIN M. PEITHMANN

Mrs. Charlie Cypress, although over 90 years old, still sews everyday without the aid of glasses. Her old sewing machine has seen continual service, for over fifty years.

DEACONESS BEDELL

Abagie Tiger dressed in a prototype of the old style costume worn by the Seminole men late in the nineteenth century.

BOB BECKER

This young Seminole girl standing in front of her home near Immokolee, wears many pounds of glass beads. She would feel immodestly dressed without them.

ROSS ALLEN'S REPTILE INSTITUTE

This method of pounding corn into meal has been used by many generations of Florida Seminoles. From this meal they make "sofkee".

Clans

IRVIN M. PEITHMANN

Naha Tiger and his wife, Lucy, are a representative older couple who make their home at Brighton Indian Reservation.

and barefooted, but this, too, is changing. Many of the men and boys are now wearing shoes.

The costumes of the women and girls are distinctive with a full, floor-length skirt made with five rows of colorful designs and a full cape of soft color. The smallest child dresses like the mother. Many of the middle aged women still wear numerous strands of colored beads around their necks. As many as twenty-five pounds of beads have been worn at one time by a matron who likes beads. This solid pyramid from her shoulder blades to her chin was worn during the day and only removed at night. She would have felt immodestly dressed without them. Since the Seminole women have great dignity, they would not consider it fitting to be seen without their beads.

A Seminole girl is given a string of colored glass beads when she reaches the age of twelve. On birthdays, strings are added for acts of virtue or given as gifts in good times until her neck, up to her chin, is buried deep beneath many strands. It used to be that after middle life, the necklaces are removed strand by strand, until only the first one remains. The last remaining strand goes to the grave with its wearer.

The purpose within the clan is affected in many ways by explicit and implicit rules of clan organization and behavior which governs the individual's conduct. For example, he recognizes that there are some whom he cannot marry. By the same

MAX NORRIS

With pride and care, Mrs. Toby John has kept her hand-cranked sewing machine, despite the humidity, in perfect working condition for over a quarter of a century.

token, there are others to whom marriage is particularly desireable. There are certain individuals with whom he can joke, while others are to be avoided on pain of social ostracism. One may point out the mother-in-law taboo in our own society as an analogous example of this type of joking.

An individual learns in a clan system like that of the Seminoles that there are relatives who must be accorded great respect, especially those who discipline, counsel, and train him through most of his life. Most important is his mother's brother. (Years ago, it traditionally was the mother's brother who acted as guide and mentor to his young nephew, during his training period for the duties of manhood.)

Finally, through his clan he is accorded various privileges and offices within the tribe, whether they be simply the right to wear a particular emblem or actual succession to high offices, per-

Costumes

DEACONESS BEDELL

John Osceola and his wife, Watsie, with their granddaughter, display their vari-colored everyday costumes.

KURT SEVERIN

Like all females, this Seminole woman takes meticulous care in adorning herself.

haps even to a chieftainship.

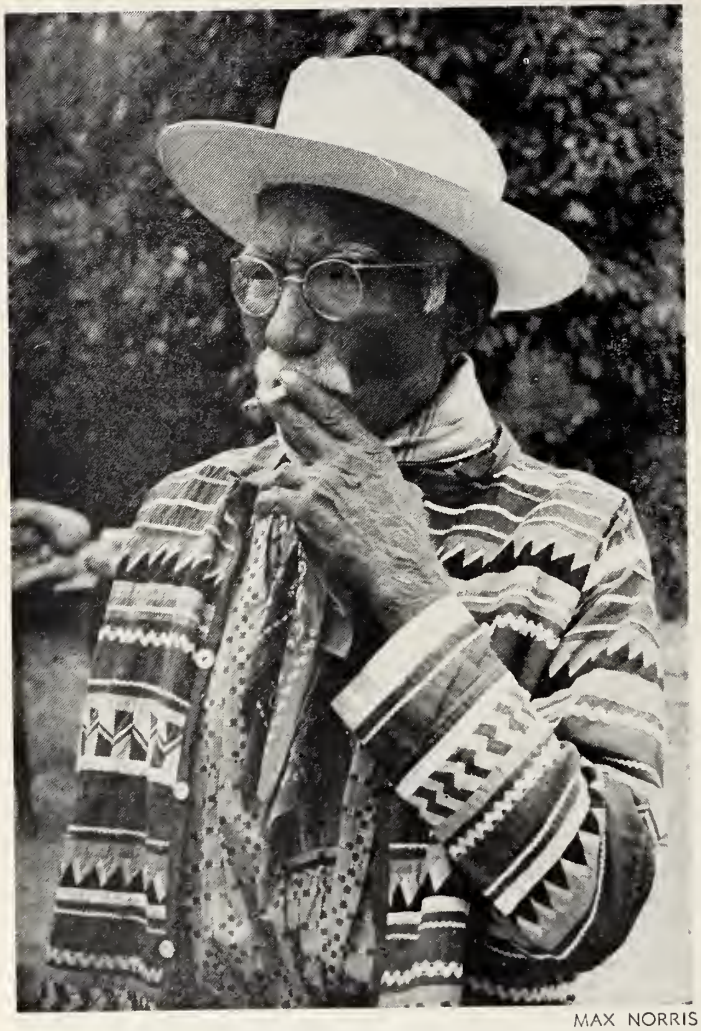
In the old days the necessities of hunting caused the band or "tribe" to disperse over the area into several separated camps; yet they remained social and political units of the Seminole people.

The camp and clan are basic social units in Seminole society. Generally, several closely related families live in one camp. The members of the

CHARLES BELDEN

A few middle aged women still wear this style hair-do, peculiar to the early Seminoles, combing the hair over a cardboard frame extending to one side of the head.

Family Organization



MAX NORRIS

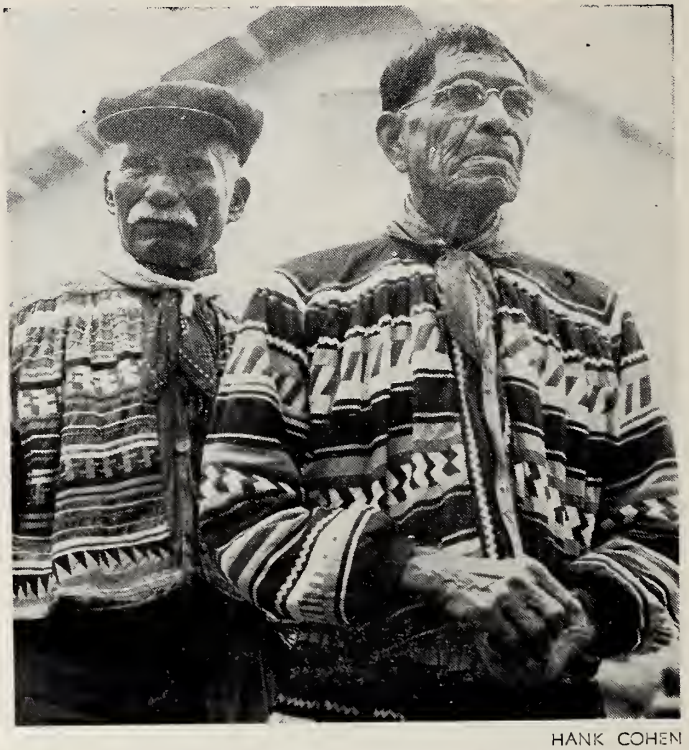
Billy Bowlegs, III, one of the oldest living Seminoles on Brighton Reservation. The designs on his multi-colored blouse represent symbols. Every Seminole garment is an original pattern.

camp are usually an elderly woman, her daughters, the daughters' children, the husbands, and unmarried brothers of all these women.

Clans also function as political units. It was a traditional rule among the Seminoles that when an Indian of one clan murdered a member of another, the wronged clan would kill the murderer, if possible, or another member of the offending clan. (It is doubtful that this vendetta continues today.)

Among the contemporary Seminoles, the clan is an integral part of the large tribal group even though the clan is still a group of related families. Clans today are named for some totem animal or manifestation of nature.* Their entire tribal and social organization is built around the families and the clans of the tribal groups.

In the white man's society, descent and inheritance are reckoned from the paternal side of the family; whereas, in the Seminole's society, which is matrilineal, the inheritance is calculated from the mother's side. The mother is considered the head of the household. Since descent is considered from



HANK COHEN

Billy Bowlegs, III, and Sam Huff, both highly respected men in the Seminole society, dressed in gaily decorated apparel, attend the annual Green Corn Dance near Okeechobee.

the mother's side, a man, when he marries, generally goes to live with his wife's family and cannot become head of her clan. When a Seminole man says, "I am going home," he means to his wife's home or, if unmarried, to his mother's home.

The children belong to the mother's clan, but take their father's name. When a Seminole speaks of a relative, he may be referring to clan kin instead of blood relation. For example, he may refer to a person as uncle or aunt who is no blood relation, but a member of his clan.

Marriage outside the clan, with the bride's bringing her husband to live with her mother after marriage, is still the rule. A man may now marry a woman of his father's former clan, but years ago this was forbidden.

The band formerly was headed by a Miko, or chief, from one clan of the group. He held this title and rank for life. At his death his successor was a nephew of the same clan—his sister's son rather than his own. Succession to power by nepotism was the established pattern. Other related clans in the tribal group had leaders who were selected in the same manner and carried the rank of Tustenugee, or subchief.

Since the Seminoles no longer have chiefs, the different clans now have councilmen who represent them in the governing body at the yearly Green Corn Dance.

BIG CYPRESS SEMINOLE CLANS

Next to the family, the most important group

This symbol is used to distinguish the different clans and family relationships in the tribal group

Seminole Girl

A Seminole girl is given a string of colored glass beads when she reaches the age of twelve. On birthdays, strings are added for acts of virtue, or given as gifts in good times until her neck, up to her chin, is buried deep beneath many strands. After middle life, the necklaces are removed strand by strand, until only the first one remains. The last remaining strand goes to the grave with its wearer.

Clans in Existence

CHARLES BELDEN

The women gather around the community cooking fire in their camp, preparing the evening meal for their families.

in the Seminole society is the clan. The customs and mores of the clans are still in practice, though more and more Seminoles are beginning to live on reservations.

Many clans that were in existence over one hundred years have disappeared because of deaths, warfare, and emigration. Among the Big Cypress Seminoles, nine clans remain: the Panther, Wildcat, Tiger, Bird, Otter, Wolf, Snake, and two others which do not derive their names from the animal kingdom, the Wind and Town clans. (The Snake and Town clans are non-totemic. The Snake clan is composed of descendants of Negro-Seminole intermarriage years ago.)

According to tribal dictates, the Town clan consists of Indians of mixed blood, the offspring of unions between Seminoles and white people, including traders and Indian captives.

Among the Cow Creek Seminoles there were five matrilineal exogamous clans in existence about fifteen years ago; the Panther, Deer, Bird, and Snake clans were totemic, while the Tallahassee ("old town") clan was not. In addition, there were several represented by Mikasuki Indians living with the Cow Creek group. These were the Otter, Bear, and Tawalako ("big town"); the latter was not totemic.

DEACONESS BEDELL

The Frank Tucker Family.
Due to modern medical aid, large families are becoming increasingly common.

IRVIN M. PEITHMANN

Charlie Cypress, over 100 years old and his wife, 90 years old, pose with two of their great grandchildren.

In all civilizations there have been certain ideas, taboos, superstitions, myths, and folktales connected with the lives of a people. Quite often, they eventually become a part of their every day lives. Even in modern times, old superstitions have endured from one generation to the next. As time passes, they are discarded to become simply a part of the folklore. There are many living today who still put credence in old superstitions and traditional beliefs of their ancestors.

The Seminole Indian by nature is a superstitious person; some of his taboos are common to other native people. One of these is the widespread belief that it will bring bad luck if an owl sits on top of one's house and hoots.

When the Reverend Clay MacCauley visited the Seminoles in 1880, he found foreign influences readily discernible in their mythology, perhaps re-

Mythology

CHARLES BELDEN

The story-teller, a very popular individual in Seminole society, is generally an older person who tells the stories of their folklore, legends and past events to the listening family.

flecting Spanish missionary influence of the seventeenth century.

MacCauley obtained most of his information from Ko-nip-ha-tco, a Seminole medicine man. He was told that the koonti* root was a gift from God, that long ago the Great Spirit sent Jesus Christ to earth with the precious plant, and that Jesus had descended upon the world at Cape Florida and had given koonti to the "red men". This conception, revealing Indian folklore elements connected with Christ, no doubt stemmed from the Spanish missionary work of many years before. It may be assumed that certain beliefs now present among the Seminoles found their way into Seminole creed and ritual after contacts with the early missionaries.

In 1939, when Robert F. Greenlee visited among the Seminoles, the following folk tales were obtained from Josie Billie, the son of Koniphatco, who told the following story about the origin of koonti:

The Breathmaker, fisaki omici, took seven men and walked a long way with them. In fact he traveled down from Georgia to a place a little below Miami. While they rested there the seven men became hungry and the Breathmaker taught them how to fish. They didn't have anything to eat or drink, so he dug into the ground at a place not more than three feet from the ocean till water sprang up. Soon the Breathmaker made it rain and told his companions to go outside. They found the ground covered with little cakes. The next morning Breathmaker made the little cakes sprout roots from their sides. This was the koonti plant.

Another sacred myth concerning the Milky Way, the pathway to the spirit world in the West, contains elements common among the American Indians with the influence of Christian teaching:

A long while back the Breathmaker blew his breath toward the sky and made the Milky Way. This white way leads to a city in the west where the

The koonti root is somewhat like a turnip in appearance but longer and larger. The Indian women removed the skin and pounded it into flour for bread making, using it as a substitute for corn meal.

L. L. COOK COMPANY

Modern picture magazines bring much pleasure to the many Seminoles, both young and old, who cannot read or write.

Big Cypress Seminoles go when they die. Bad people stay in ground right where they are buried. Everytime you go through the woods and step where a bad person is buried you feel afraid even though the grave is covered over with bushes and trees.

Good people walk over the Milky Way to a city in Western sky. Animals take the same path when they die. Long ago animals of an Indian—dogs and horses—were killed so they might go with their masters.

The Seminoles believe that the Milky Way shines brightest following the death of one of their kinfolk so that his path to the "City in the Sky" may be lighted for him. A person who is eligible to walk over the sky path must be one whom everybody likes, one who does not talk in an evil manner, and one who does not lie or steal. Moreover, he should not drink too much and must be courageous on all occasions. The reverse of these qualities characterizes a bad person.

Other minor concepts dealing with the sky world include the belief that there is a connection between the rainbow and the stopping of the rain. The rainbow is called *okabaci sincosli*, rain stop. When the sun is eclipsed, the Seminoles believe that a toad frog comes and gradually eats away the sun's surface until it completely disappears.. They fire guns (formerly arrows) at the toad frog to prevent the eclipse. When Josie Billie was a small boy, he remembers that people at his father's camp shot off guns and raised a great clamor when either the sun or the moon suffered eclipse.

Among these people, too, the Big Dipper is referred to as *piklici k'abi*, boat image. The morning star is called *apak k'aci*, tomorrow star; and the evening star is known as *owaci kidisci*, red star.

It is difficult to speak of a distinct Seminole mythology and folklore since their tales have recognizable elements common to the entire region of the Southeast. It is more than possible that

IRVIN M. PEITHMANN

Frank Shore and his family live on Brighton Reservation. Geneva (on right) is an honor student at the Okeechobee High School.

there had been a good deal of borrowing of tales between the so-called Cow Creek Seminoles, who live northwest of Lake Okeechobee, and the Mikasuki people, who live in the Big Cypress Swamp; evidence of such borrowing is not now discernible.

Like other peoples in the southeastern area, the Seminoles have origin myths for their clans and for certain everyday foods such as koonti and corn. The myth about the origin of corn and pumpkins is as follows:

Corn women lived in the woods and were big, fat, and heavy. Their bodies were made like a big ear of corn. They scraped their legs and kernels fell off on the ground.

One time a corn woman stole a little Indian boy scarcely four weeks old. She took him home and fed him on corn kernels. He grew up big and strong. When he was grown the corn woman returned him. He was soon married.

Corn woman gave him four kernels of corn from which he grew four large plants. Soon the family had plenty of corn. When it was all gathered it filled a huge chest. That is the way the Indians obtained corn.

Indians got pumpkin from Jesus at the same time they got koonti. Jesus had a pocketful of pumpkin seeds. The other pocket was full of turkey feathers.

Legends

Jesus used to catch turkeys for the Indian boys.

MEN VISIT SKY TO SEE GOD.

Once there were five men, four Indians and a colored man. They wanted to see God whom they knew lived in the sky; so they walked east for about a month till they came to the end of the land. They had lots of bundles for a long trip, and threw the bundles off first, then jumped off the land and passed over the horizon. They fell fast about a minute and then started back upward till they reached the sky. But the colored man jumped off and did not get through. The sky hit him and killed him.

The Indian men walked west about a month till they came to a camp. There they discovered a house, but they did not know who might live there.

They saw an old woman who said. "Whom do you want to see?" "We want to see God," they said. "You can't see him now. You wait," she replied.

One evening they walked a little way from camp and saw a lot of angels dressed in white clothes and wings. The angels were playing ball just as the Seminole do at their Green Corn Dance. Then two of the men said that they wanted to stay up in the sky and become angels; but the other two wanted to go home.

About that time God came up and said, "All right". They put up a big kettle and boiled the two men who wanted to be angels until there was nothing left but their bones. Then God took the bones and fitted them together, and put white cloth on them. He beat them with a white switch. They came to life, had wings, and were angels. They looked so different that the other men failed to recognize them as former companions.

"What do you two boys want to do now?" the angels asked. "Want to go home?" Both answered yes; so the angel told them to gather all their bundles together and go to sleep. They did so and when they awoke they were home again. In this manner they escaped taking the long walk home.

ROSS ALLEN'S REPTILE INSTITUTE

These school children on a field trip to an Indian camp, learn first hand, the art of Seminole handicraft.

HANK COHEN

Eli Morgan, a prominent Seminole citizen lives on Brighton Indian Reservation, not far from Lake Okeechobee.

Myths of clan origin are found among the Florida Seminole, but it is suspected that this lore is fragmentary; much has been distorted and lost. One very interesting myth concerning the emergence of the clans is as follows:

A long time ago when the Indians were emerging from the mountain, God spoke to the Panther clan and Wind clan when they were still like ten month old babies. God told them to come out of the mountain. So they dug and they dug and were the first of the forty-seven Seminole clans to come out. They were like brothers.

Deer and Wolf clans were also very close since both had four feet. Then the Snake clan and all the others came out, and the Snake was called King.

The Indians came out of the mountain first, and last of all came the Negro. He stayed in the mud so long that when he came out he was black as coal.

Panther clan followed Wind clan from the navel of the earth. Panther clan had a big head and couldn't get out. The Wind clan came out like a whirlwind. The Wind clan came out of one side of roots which grew on the mound, while the Panther clan members came out on the other side. Bird clan came out third, and Snake last.

The trees grew up so fast that Panther was held down at first. Wind clan blew up the roots, and then Panther came out followed by Bird and Snake.

Clan Legends

IRVIN M. PEITHMANN

Webster Talmsey Wise, an Oklahoma Seminole, employed at Big Cypress Reservation. Many Indians are natural born mechanics.

They came out of the mound like babies.

Josie Billie, a member of the Panther clan and a former medicine man, told Robert F. Greenlee a folklore story of the origin of the Town clan.

When the Seminoles fought at St. Augustine, they found two white girls wandering in the woods, lost, tired, and hungry. They might have been Spaniards. Some of the tribe wanted to kill them, but the chief said not to, since they were women, and could be kept and forced to work.. Eventually they married Indian men. As these women were not Seminole, they belonged to no clan. Thus, their children had no clan relations.

It is generally the old people or grandparents who are the storytellers in the Seminole villages. As the family sits around the campfire in the evening before the children fall asleep, they tell stories of the past to the listening family. The Seminoles have a keen appreciation of the good points of a story and a natural ability as story tellers. Their stories of the forces of nature, heavenly bodies, and the animals of the forest are usually endowed with speech. Their legends and folktales in their beauty of expression, sentiment, charm, and imagination compare favorably with the folklore stories of other Indians and peoples.

Many of the folktales and legends have been preserved. Among them are several versions relating to the origin of mankind. One tells of three men who stopped beside a small pool to bathe. The first man who entered came out clean, and his descendants are white people. Because the water had been dirtied,the second man who emerged from the pool was not quite so clean, and his descendants are the Indians. The water was very dirty by this time; and when the third man came from the pool, he was black, and his people are Negroes.

In another version, the Seminole believed that the Great Spirit fashioned men out of clay. He overbaked the first batch, and they came out black and burned. These are the Negroes. The next batch was underbaked and came out pale. These are the white man. In the next attempt, the Great Spirit created fresh models, subjected them to just the right amount of baking. They came out perfectly colored. These are the Indians.

There is another legend concerning man's origin. Although not a Seminole folktale, it is interesting.

When the white, black, and red man had been created, they were very poor, with no lodges, tools, with neither traps nor weapons with which to kill game. One day while the three men were looking up in the sky, three boxes floated down to earth beside them. Then the voice of the Great Spirit was heard. He first commanded the white man to look into the boxes and choose one of them for his portion. The white man opened the boxes and selected the one containing pens, ink, compasses, and such things as his people could use. The Indian, given the second choice choice, chose the box containing tomahawks, knives, clubs, and traps, all things useful in war and hunting. Then the Great Spirit told the Negro that he must be content with the remaining box. This was filled with axes and hoes, buckets in which to carry water, and whips for driving oxen. This meant that his people must work for the white man and the Indian.

Another folktale among the Seminole concerns snakes. It is known that many Seminole Indians will not kill a snake if they can avoid it. The following legend is based on this action.

The rattlesnake originally had no teeth or fangs and was harmless in every way. One day a "bad" Indian came upon a mother rattlesnake with a nest of young ones. He killed the babies, but the mother was able to escape. She cried bitterly for three days; then she went to the Indian chief and told him of the crime. The chief made some teeth and fitted them into the snake's mouth and said, "Next time man comes, you bite him." Since then according to tradition, no Seminole will kill a rattlesnake, believing that if the snake is unmolested, it will not bite.

The Seminoles still celebrate the time of the Green Corn Dance and the autumnal Hunting Dance which are a holdover from their Creek ancestry. The Green Corn Dance is observed in much the same way as it was a hundred years ago. Many events connected with the Seminole existence are depicted in the interpretative dances.

The Green Corn Dance is a very old festival. The Seminole dance is derived from the Creek busk* ceremony. Variations of the Green Corn Dance have been held year after year by the Florida Seminoles.

The Timucuans, who lived in Florida centuries before the Seminoles came, observed and held the Green Corn Dance every year.

Because the Seminoles no longer have chiefs, they appoint councilmen who represent their interests in the Main Council. This Council legislates

The ward busk cames fram Baskita (Baos-ke-tuh), meaning to fast. The early Creek Indians believed that by participating in the Busk ceremony it restored man to himself, ta his family, and ta his tribal group.

Green Corn Dance

HANK COHEN

These women and children on Brighton Reservation wait in line to be served a picnic meal. Clan and family gatherings have been a tradition with the Seminoles for many generations.

controlling laws, regulates tribal affairs, and performs marriages. Children born during the year are given their names at the time of the Green Corn Dance.

CREEK GREEN CORN DANCE

To celebrate their New Year the Creek Indians, who lived in Georgia and Alabama, held a ceremony in the fall after the corn had ripened, called the *Shot Cay Taw* (Green Corn Dance). It was held on the first day after the appearance of the first new moon of the vernal equinox, the beginning of their new year. At this time, they cleaned their houses; burned all their discarded clothing, tools, and weapons; and replaced them with new ones.

After the fires in their houses were extinguished and the hearths were sprinkled with white sand, the most important rite of the festival began: that of lighting the New Fire. In the town square, or plaza, four large logs were placed on the ground to form a cross with the outer ends facing the direction of the four cardinal points of the compass. At daybreak, the Fire Maker, facing the rising sun, struck a piece of flint and lighted the bundle of dried grass. As it burst into flame, he placed it in the center of the four logs, lighting the New Fire. The villagers sang songs as they danced around the fire. At the conclusion of the ceremonies, each woman in the village was given an ember from the New Fire to take to her home to rekindle her own hearth. It was in this manner that the Creek Indians began the new year, thankful for the harvest and purified for the days ahead.

Now, as in the days of old, this festival is held after the corn has ripened. It is at this five day get-together once a year that all tribal problems are considered and solved. It is now an annual convention in which all the clans participate. Marriages are also contracted at this time.

In the Seminole settlements, the Cow Creek group, living on a reservation near Lake Okeechobee, hold their Green Corn Festival late in June or early July, after the Mikasukis have held theirs. Long ago rattles used in their dances were made of coconut shells with pebbles inside; now tin cans containing a few pebbles are used by tying them to the leg of the dancer just above the ankle.

A ball game is played during the festival in which both young men and women participate.

This celebration starts in the evening after the fires are lighted and continues far into the night. Old and young sing songs and dance their old dances and enjoy the food prepared by the women.

One of the rites during the Corn Dance or festival is the taking of an emetic by the participants. This mystic draught is brewed of leaves from the yaupon tree or shrub. Taken internally, it acts as an emetic and purgative. The Creeks refer to it as *asi* instead of the popular expression *black drink*. They had a religious belief that *asi* purified them from all sin and left them in a state of perfect innocence. It was also believed to endow the drinker with great prowess and daring in war. It was further used as a ritual to pledge friendship.

Another feature of the Green Corn Dance is the ceremonial scratching which occurs just before the feather dance on the second day of the celebration.

The Black Drink

HANK COHEN

The women and children gather under the trees and enjoy their picnic dinner, at Brighton Reservation. Like other groups the Seminoles enjoy social contacts with relatives and neighbors.

Women are not allowed to participate. Snake fangs or steel needles are inserted into a wooden holder and used to scratch the assembled members until blood is drawn. This bleeding is believed to purify their bodies. Such scratching is also known to be administered as punishment to children.

Many Seminole ancestral folk songs have survived for generations in the Everglade country of southern Florida. Some of their songs, chants, and dance rhythms from the rituals of the Green Corn Dance are Seminole classics.

"The Hunting Songs," "Snake Song," and "The Horned Owl Song" are sung without accompaniment. "Little Red Rabbit," "The Night of Love," "The Story of the Little Coon," and "White Feather" are musical legends. Other songs such as "The Fox Song," "Catfish Song," "Buffalo Song," and "Alligator Song" are accompanied be the swish and click of rattles.

Small water drums, gourds, tortoise shell, coconut shell, rattles, and the flute were the musical instruments used to accompany their songs.

AUTUMN HUNTING DANCE

Since the times of earliest contact with missionaries, native and Christian elements have become inextricably mixed. According to some reports there was a belief in a Supreme Being having a dual personality. Under the name *Ishtohollo—Ishto* signifies mighty and *Hollo*, goodness—he brought all that was good and beneficient to man. Under the name *Yo-He-Wah*, he represented a god of vengeance who com-

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

The ancient Timucuans, who lived in Florida centuries before the Seminoles, observed the ritual of the Black Drink.

Songs

DEACONESS BEDELL

Mrs. Charlie Jumper (left) and Harley Jumper (right) visit the Glade Cross Mission in the town of Everglades.

manded demons, pronounced curses and inflicted pestilence and calamities. His name was never mentioned in common speech, but was chanted around the sacred fire as a ritual of appeasement.

To appease *Yo-He-Wah,* a sin offering known as "The Sin Offering of the Hunt" was made at the time of the Autumn hunt. This offering was the rite of burning in the woods, where it fell, the first deer killed during the new season. This act was believed to bring health to any ailing member of the hunter's family as well as forgiveness for his sins. Another sacrifice was the custom of burning a small part of every deer slain on or near the campgrounds before the meat was prepared for eating. When the stew was cooked, the Indians dipped their middle fingers in the broth and sprinkled it over the graves of their women and children in the burial grounds nearby. This was done to ward off evil spirits. There are Indians living today who still cling to old beliefs such as this one.

Ancient traditions are hard to discard; however, the Indians are slowly letting down the bars of tribal isolation. As they gradually let down the

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

The ancient Timucua Indians were sun worshippers. To appease the Sun God, a stag's head, decorated with flowers, was offered as a sacrifice.

barriers, they are beginning to see the advantages of learning to read and write. In spite of tribal traditions, missionaries of the Episcopal and Baptist Churches are now teaching them the Christian faith. They regard the missionaries as friends and counselors and no longer resent them. Many of those living on reservations have embraced a Christian religion.

The Seminoles still consider their burial grounds sacred. These are hidden in remote spots in the Everglades known only to the next of kin. Even today among many Seminoles, personal belongings are placed with the dead. All items are broken, or "killed," before they are placed with the body. Pots and pans are bent out of shape before they

IRVIN M. PEITHMANN

Lilly Tiger, a hunter and guide in the Big Cypress Swamp, lives with his sister Lucy Billie on the Big Cypress Indian Reservation.

Burial Customs

IRVIN M. PEITHMANN

The Baptist Church at Big Cypress Indian Reservation has a large membership. The church is a meeting place for gatherings and social affairs of the Seminole community.

are placed for burial. It was an old rule that when a Seminole died, the family would abandon camp and move elsewhere. This custom is now being discontinued. Aged Seminoles, who have lived so long in the framework of their ancient customs, are watching their old traditions slip away.

ANCIENT RELIGIOUS CEREMONIAL RITES OF TIMUCUA, AND APALACHEE INDIANS

These ancient tribes were sun worshipers. On the dawn of a certain day every spring, a stag's head, decorated with flowers, was set up on a pole facing east. As the first rays of light touched the antlered head, the assembled tribe bowed their heads in prayer. If the crops had failed, first-born children and captives were offered as a sacrifice to appease the Sun God.

The moon was also venerated and was associated with the Indian's water worship which involved many rites. When Indians became sick, they bathed three times in clear running water. Later, when measles were spread by the Europeans, this practice resulted in almost certain death.

As a whole the Seminoles preserve a polite but stolid indifference toward the Christian religion. Of those Seminoles living off the reservations only

"THE END OF THE TRAIL"

A Seminole burial deep in the swamps. Personal items of the deceased have been placed in and near the casket to be used in the "Spirit World".

Religion

IRVIN M. PEITHMANN

Reverend Billy Osceolo, minister of the Boptist church located on Brighton Indion Reservotion.

a small minority have adopted the Christian faith. This is not due to a lack of effort on the part of missionaries who work among them, but rather to the isolated manner in which they have lived for the past 100 years. They were isolated from the outside world and civilizing influences. Thus, living in this small, sequestered world sealed off by the saw grass swampland and virgin forest, has kept alive the mistrust and suspicions of the past. Their attitude toward the white man's civilization has been that of passive resistance — "time has stood still" for them. Later contacts with the outside world have done little to change their attitude. This has made it very difficult for ethnologists to study them. The few who have established long friendships with the Seminole leaders admit there are certain aspects of their social, religious, and political life that defy accurate evaluation because the background facts are totally unknown to history.

This is not so strange when one stops to consider that white men, too, are motivated by their cultural background. Influenced by parents and close associates in formative years, one forms his prejudices, likes, and dislikes at a very early age. The home environment in which an individual has been reared forms to a great extent the integrity of his beliefs for the rest of his life.

In the early Indian times, the medicine man always played a significant role in the Indians' spiritual life. He also used in his practice a combination of herbs, roots, and barks, many of them amazingly effective.

The ceremonies and rituals of the Indians were religious in character. This traditional approach to healing and treatment of the sick through the ministrations of medicine men has been regarded by Christian laymen as a harmful aspect of heathenism. Even today there are persons who still believe that "demons" and "devils" must be cast out before a sick person can become well.

One should remember that in this modern age he is likely to accept only the things that fit into the frame of his scientific and philosophical beliefs. The white man, therefore, should not condemn and ridicule the Indians for their convictions. Such religious beliefs, when measured by the white man's standards, of course would be considered pagan. But the Indians' rituals and ceremonies are more significant to them than some of the white man's present day religious observances are to him. The Seminoles are not disturbed or hindered by Freudian theories and practices, but live according to their ancient customs and traditions.

We too . . . are victims of old habits and illusions . . . and cling to . . . old traditions, customs and ideas.

Many of the Seminoles believe in one God, or "Great Spirit," who lives far, far up in the sky and never visits the earth. This identification with Christianity, that the Christian God and the Indian

IRVIN M. PEITHMANN

The Boptist Church ot Brighton Indion Reservotion is one of two churches serving the spiritual needs in this Seminole community.

God are one and the same, probably resulted from early contacts with missionaries.

A surprising thing about the Seminole religion is their tolerance for other religions. The Seminoles seem to accept Christianity not as a religion but as an aspect of all religions. He regards his own faith in the same manner. The first belongs to the white man; the second, to the Indian. In this man-

ner, he retains his own convictions because he cannot conceive that everything that he and his ancestors have believed and praticed all their lives is false. To simplify matters, he simply blends the two. He hestitates to be converted completely to the Christian faith because it means the end of rituals he considers essential to his spiritual welfare.

These old beliefs are slowly being discarded. Reverend Genus Crenshaw, a Baptist missionary working among the Florida Indians is assisting Indians who have become ministers. Reverend Billy Osceola, Henry Cypress, Josie Billie and other church workers are getting the young folks to attend church services.

Among the Seminoles as well as among other Indian groups there still is some confusion of the white man's religion. There are two missionary groups working among the Florida Seminoles, the Baptists and the Episcopalians. Indians who have embraced the Episcopalian faith have been chided by some of the Indian Baptist ministers that they have not been baptized because they have not been immersed (baptized). This minor confusion is a reminder of a speech made long ago by a Sioux chief, Spotted Tail:

I am bothered what to believe, some years ago a good man, I think, came to us. He talked me out of my old faith; and after a while, thinking that he must know more of these matters than an ignorant Indian, I joined his church, and became a Methodist. After a while he went away; another man came and talked, and I became a Baptist; then another came and talked, and I became a Presbyterian. Now another one has come, and wants me to be an Episcopalian. All these people tell different stories, and each wants me to believe that his special way is the only way to be good and save my soul. I have about made up my mind that they either all lie, or that they don't know any more about it than I did at first. I have always believed in the Great Spirit, and worshipped him in my own way. These people don't seem to want to change my belief in the Great Spirit, but to change my way of talking to him. White men have education and books, and ought to know exactly what to do, but hardly any two of them agree on what should be done!

The Indian also believes that the well-being of his people depends directly on the observance of the Green Corn Dance. To give up this ceremony would result in disintegration of the social, religious, and political organization of his tribal society. He cannot be blamed if he resents and mistrusts the efforts of white missionaries to make him abandon it. Thus, he still lives in the shadow of the past and continues his native religious observances.

THE MEDICINE BUNDLE

Only in recent years has it become known that Medicine Bundles are still in use among the Seminoles. The Medicine Bundle was originally used for its curative properties, but now it seems more a symbol than a practical device. It remains a part of the Medicine Man's paraphernalia, nonetheless, and is still conferred, diploma-like, on those who qualify as medicine men. Bundles are brought out of hiding only on Court Day during the Green Corn Dance. This ritual is still a closely guarded secret, and only the Indians themselves are present at this ceremony. The rite is sacred and sincere, still serving its original purposes in the social, religious, and political life of the tribe. To prevent curiosity seekers from attending, the Indians hold the ceremonies in some remote and secret place known only to themselves.

The Medicine Bundle is to the Seminole what the Ark of the Covenant was to the Jewish people of Biblical times. They believe that the medicine in the bundle embodies supernatural power and that the bundle contains everything necessary for the Indian's well-being. It is always kept wrapped in a deerskin and is unwrapped only on ceremonial occasions by the medicine man. The importance of the Medicine Bundle can be interpreted in the following manner:

The Seminole rank-and-file is the "body"; the council of older men is the "brain"; and the Medicine Bundle is the "soul". They believe that the medicine is endowed with life, having power to do great good. Conversely, if the Bundle is misused or abused, it can visit savage harm upon them. That is the reason that it is so carefully guarded. At the time of the Green Corn Dance the first thing the medicine man does as he stands naked in the pond facing east at daybreak is to rub the water over his body as he prays that he may handle the medicine wisely and safely for the good of all.

The medicine consists of many constituent items: pieces of horn, feathers, stones, and dried animal parts. Among the Florida Seminoles, there are three bundles with identical objects in each bundle. What symbolic or other meanings they have are known only to the medicine man.

During the Seminole wars over 100 years ago, small bundles were made up from the larger ones and sent with war parties in the belief that they would protect and give the warriors "Power in War."

Medicine as practiced by modern physicians differs greatly from the methods used by a Seminole medicine man. The term medicine to a Seminole includes more than drugs and stimulants as aids to health. It also includes such aspects as diagnosis, mysterious mental ailments, and curing of diseases and bodily ills. Under the ministrations of the medicine man, the patient comes under the spell of ritual and ceremony that are connected with birth, death, sickness, and the preservation and teaching of tribal lore. A medicine man acts as a spokesman of his group in matters concerning Indian and white relations. With such a variety of duties, he plays a powerful role in tribal affairs, a power of which he is fully aware. Among the Mikasuki, several medicine men still actively practice healing. These older men are respected for their medical knowledge and are often consulted by the educated Seminoles. These shamans rely on

Building a Boat

IRVIN M. PEITHMANN

Charlie Cypress and his wife at their home on Cypress Reservation.

KURT SEVERIN

Charlie Cypress selects a straight-grained tree for a toy dugout canoe.

KURT SEVERIN

Chorlie Cypress instructs Russel Osceolo in the art of boot building.

KURT SEVERIN

Russel Osceolo tries out his boot by giving his sister's doll a ride in it.

War Medicine

IRVIN M. PEITHMANN

WHEEL OF LIFE

In all civilizations there have been certain ideas, taboos, superstitions, myths, and folktales connected with the lives of a people. Quite often they become a part of their every day lives. Even in modern times, old superstitions have endured from one generation to the next. As time passes, they are discarded to become simply a part of the folklore. There are many living today who still put credence in old superstitions and traditional beliefs of their ancestors.

One of the most interesting facets of Seminole mythology is "The Wheel of Life." The wheel is made up of five colored circles with a cross in the center. The inner circle and cross are red, followed in order from the center outward by blue, black, yellow and white.

The author, accompanied by Erland Larson, enjoyed a rare experience when Gotch Nagoftee (Josie Billie) drew and explained how the Wheel of Life decides man's fate. The colors in this wheel symbol have different meanings. "Red or blood-red—man well; Blue—when man struck sick, skin turns blue; Black—blood turns black and man dies; Yellow—when man dead, bones yellow; White—when man dead long time, flesh all gone, bones white".

The red-spoked wheel represents the earth and during illness the sick man's ghost wanders or follows the color paths of the wheel. "Man in center when well—man gets sick—ghost goes north, then around to east. When ghost gets east it looks west and sees long trail—spirits of the dead lure ghost on; the medicine man calls it back. If ghost goes on west, man dies and his spirit goes by way of the red spoke to the village of the dead where it meets the forefathers and relatives of his clan".

herbs which scientists find do contain medicinal and healing properties, and they also resort to blood-letting and other "cures." Chants, songs and trances are also a part of the medicine man's hypnotic "magic" to impress the patient and bring him back to health.

The medicine men have in their possession a fragment of the old war medicine which has been inherited from some clan members. According to Josie Billie, now a Baptist minister, who acted as informant to Greenlee, this war medicine is so powerful that it is not kept in the villages or camps but is hidden away at the Green Corn Dance grounds and used only at this festival. The medicine is a silver or clay-colored powder kept in small buckskin bags. The number of bags in possession of a medicine man varies; some have twelve; some, only two. If some of the powder is spilled accidentally when the bags are opened at the Green Corn Dance, it cannot be touched by hand but must be gently scraped into a pile with a quill of a buzzard's wing.

This war medicine is forbidden to the women. The Seminole belief in it is so strong that if a woman approached this potent medicine, she would be overwhelmed, and struck to the ground.

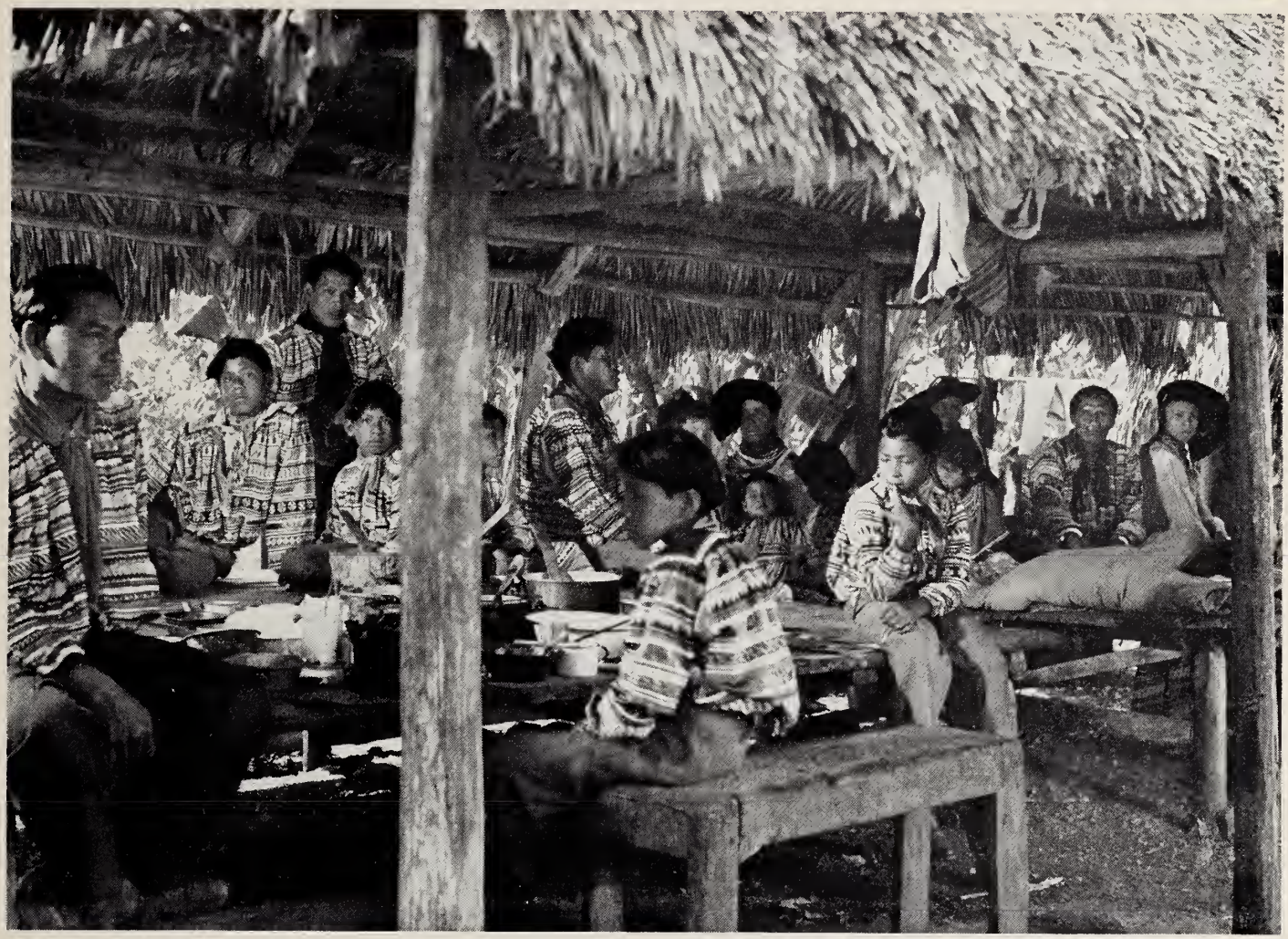
When this medicine passes into new hands upon the death of the medicine man, the old buckskin bags are destroyed, and the powder is transferred to new pouches. The transfer of the sacred medicine bundles to others who qualify to receive them is strictly a clan affair.

Ritual and social custom require the services of medicine men, and their services remain a conventional requisite in the lives of most Seminoles who have an inordinate interest in their health. Those who are treated by a white physician have been noticed to return again and again for medicine long after the need for therapy has passed.

Tribal lore and healing and ceremonial practices are not taught to all young Seminole men but only to those who are willing to pursue and study the needed preparation as medicine man in their society. The qualifications for a medicine man are a patient temperament, a sympathetic understanding of human nature, and a dedication to the duty of his calling. A medicine man does not confine his teaching to members of his own clan but will instruct anyone whom he thinks is deserving. Many other Indians practice healing, but they are referred to as doctors.

The apprenticeship of medicine men is linked with the lunar calendar. Actual curing power is acquired only after long, hard study and is measured by degrees similar to those conferred by the Masonic Lodge. Few of the modern medicine men have advanced to the ultimate degree of proficiency. Billy Motlo, who instructed Josie Billie, advanced to the degree named after the tenth month, *Yobi-hasi* (calm moon, no wind). Josie

Medical Practice



CHARLES BELDEN

The families of a Seminole camp gather in a large chickee at mealtime. After the meal, the old and the young linger to visit with neighbors who drop in during the evening.

Billie, now in his late sixties, made medicine for over twenty-five years. After seven years of study, he reached the degree which is named after the first month *Fubi-hasi* (wind moon). During the first month of his preparation, the "black drink" was given to him as a purification prerequisite to his office. Herbs and medicine were then administered for eight days more. He was permitted to pursue a home study course with the understanding that he return to the senior medicine man the first of the following year to ask questions and receive further instructions from his master mentor. *Yaholi* is the most exalted degree. Josie Billie bears the title *Aiyik imi-fosi* (medicine grandfather).

A common Indian doctor carries the title *Aiyik-Comi*. The Wind, Town, and Panther clans are now, or have been, headed by medicine men. The medicine man and doctors are paid no cash fees by their patients but are given gifts of venison, pigs, chickens, and skins. The practitioner also will accept cloth as recompense for his services.

If a medicine man's patient dies, the medicine man must go through purification rites. He must take the "black drink" and wait two weeks to cleanse himself so he may requalify to heal again. Meat and fish must not be eaten while making medicine. If he does not take the "black drink" to cleanse himself inside and out, he must not make medicine for four months.

Women are allowed to practice to a limited extent since children and minor rites require no special preparation.

The Seminole has an entirely different concept of medicine when it is compared to that of white people. The latter think of medicine as drugs, ointments, or cathartics which will benefit the physical body. The Seminole thinks of benefits which can be produced only through the offices of the medicine man. He believes that the ability to cure lies in being able to recite certain medicinal formulas, perform prescribed rites, and blow on the brewed medicine in a certain way. His theory of medicine originates from the convention that the trained medicine man can control the forces

Tribal Beliefs

IRVIN M. PEITHMANN

Frank Shore and his large family live on the Brighton Indian Reservation. Their camp, shown here, is comfortably located on a hammock among the palm trees. Most Seminole camps are laid out in the same manner.

of nature and make disease yield to his personal efforts. The belief in a double soul is a part of the diagnosis and cure of disease. The medicine man also holds that a direct relationship exists between dreams and sickness. The ideas concerning the soul, its dual nature and its survival, are important for the understanding of the medical appraisal and treatment. In this connection, Josie Billie told the author:

He believes the spirit goes up north and likes it there, one spirit goes north and around east, gets east, then goes over Milky Way to west and city of the dead. Then person dies. In four days other ghost goes at nightfall. At night sometimes one ghost goes north —likes it there, but comes back before dawn. Persons all right since dream. If it goes north and a little way east, somebody sick, body shakes. Medicine man sing, call ghost back. Blow on pipe and go after ghost, bring it back to east, then south middle. Get ghost back, person get well.

He also explained that sometimes the ghost enjoys its nocturnal adventures so much that it refuses to come back at dawn. When this occurs, the body becomes sick. Thus, a medicine man first asks his patient about his dreams. On learning from the dream how the soul has been detained, he employs a specific chant to counteract the influence and entreats the soul to return. The medicine man must blow his breath, his "ammunition" as he calls it, through the medicine pipe. He stolidly believes that a definite power emanates from him when he blows through the pipe into the medicine. The power will be adequate, he thinks, to draw back the truant soul.

When the nature of a patient's sickness is ascertained, the proper herbs are gathered and mixed in a pot. Suitable incantations are sung by the medicine man. At the same time, he blows on the concoction through a bamboo tube. This mystic rite is indispensable to the effect of the medicine.

ST. PETERSBURG TIMES

The Seminoles move to higher ground when they see the saw grass pollen floating in calm air. A storm is coming.

Medicinal herbs must be picked from the north and east sides of a bush. To use leaves from either the south or west sides would bring bad luck to the patient and might cause his death. To ward off evil, both medicine man and patient face the east. A medicine man never makes up medicine in advance; however, in some cases he will allow a patient to take medicine home.

Medicine is used to enable a woman to become pregnant. A root derivative brew is made every new moon for four months in succession. Another type of medicine from different herbs is compounded for the husband as well. If this medicine

Ritual Medicine

IRVIN M. PEITHMANN

Frank Shore and one of his sons, like mony present day Seminoles, weor "store-bought" clothes.

is taken by both, they believe the woman will soon have a child.

Sweet bay leaves, *toli,* are used with other herbs to make medicine. These leaves are used for ceremonial medicine-making after a death in order to drive away the ghost of the deceased so that the body may be touched. The same brew is also used to remove the fear of the unknown and the unseen.

Cedar leaf *acini* and sassafras *cakani* are effecttive medicinally, but in the southern Everglades these herbs do not grow. Consequently, former medicine men obtained their supply from the region near Punta Gorda. Sassafras may be used for coughing, gallstones, and pain in the bladder.

Willow *hoyanici* is utilized if a person seeks good luck at hunting.

Snake root is sometimes boiled in a pot and taken internally for a stomach ache.

Tobacco is used in preventive rites to ward off approaching danger, it is also employed medicinally and is smoked by men and women alike.

RITUAL MEDICINE

Ritual medicine is used in connection with birth, puberty, death, and mourning; but it is chiefly devoted to curing the sick. Rites involving chants over medicine placed on two folds of new cloth are held in behalf of small children. This ceremony was presumed to strengthen a child during its first month of life.

IRVIN M. PEITHMANN

The Indian children of Brighton Reservation attend school at nearby Okeechobee. Shown here with white students and teachers.

Sometimes the medicine man brings patients who have not responded to his treatment to a white doctor. When the white physician effects a cure, the medicine man takes over and assumes more than his share of credit for the patient's recovery.

Although Seminole medicine men in their traditional healing of the sick use both curative and ritual medicine, they also rely heavily on the occult. Tobacco is frequently used for supernatural purposes to ward off evil influences. Tobacco and pipe are used in a service to divert hurricanes so that they will pass around Indian villages.

The Seminole barometer for predicting hurricanes is simply the pollen of the saw grass floating in the air. An atmospheric condition of foreboding calm makes the pollen visible for several days before the hurricane moves inland. When this phen-

omenon is observed, the Seminoles seek higher ground.

The medicine man also believes that the use of tobacco in certain rites will keep pestilence away from his village.

Love medicines are common among the Seminole boys and girls. Frequently, young men come to the medicine men to obtain medicine which will capture the affections of the chosen girl. More often, young girls seek love potions to attract the attention of a desirable man. The name of the loved one is given to the medicine man who then brews a special medicine. All the while he sings of the desired one and repeats his name. After the medicine is prepared, it is given to the person to take home.

Years ago the Indian medicine men were bitter enemies of white men and their ways. Josie Billie, a former medicine man, knows that his people must learn the white man's ways and that Seminole children must be taught to read and write in order to compete with the whites.

Frank Shore, a Seminole Indian Medicine Man living on the Brighton reservation also realizes the value of education. All of his seven children attend school, his eldest daughter Geneva is an honor student at the Okeechobee high school.

It is known that in severe cases of illness that medicine men now cooperate with white doctors, but the gradual acceptance of white doctors and nurses is the beginning of the end for the medicine man. He has, by the presence of the white civilization, been forced to abandon some of the old beliefs.

IRVIN M. PEITHMANN

Lucy Billie, wife of Josie Billie uses her own special cooking grate. With utmost patience and skill, she prepares a meal of sweet potatoes and chicken, that excels in taste and goodness anything done on the most modern kitchen equipment.

IRVIN M. PEITHMANN

The author pays a return visit to the Charlie Cypress family at Big Cypress Indian Reservation, near the Big Cypress Swamp in southern Florida. The first copy of the book was presented to his friend, Charlie Cypress, one of the oldest living Seminoles. Very little has been written about the Seminoles that has been acceptable to them, but this book by Peithmann has been enthusiastically received by the old timers.

Almost all of the Indians are now using modern hospital facilities in cases of severe illness and childbirth. They pay for these services the same as white people do. In accepting the way of white men, they test a new idea hesitantly, seeking what they believe to be for their own good and insisting on being fully convinced. The younger generation of Seminoles are now going to white doctors for treatment. The older generation finds it increasingly difficult to cling to old customs which have lingered on since the time when these people were left to fend for themselves in their Everglades exile over a century ago.

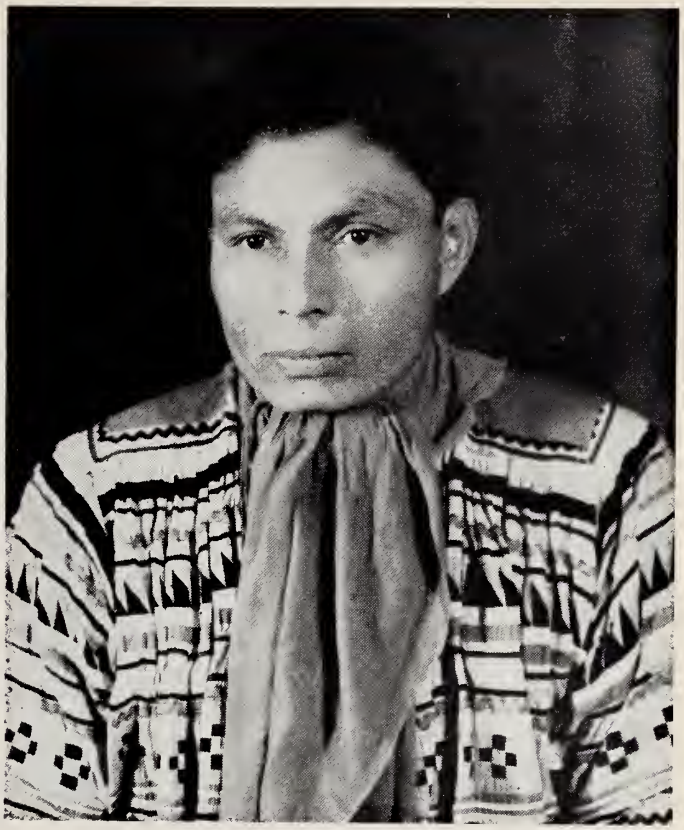
Josie Billie is now a Baptist minister, and as the other older medicine men pass away, their mystic secrets are apt to pass with them. Increasing contacts by the younger generation with the white's civilization will probably end the neo-primitive era of their history.

The role of the medicine man in the Seminole society follows the traditional pattern of most peoples in the world. Throughout the history of man-

Marriage

ST. PETERSBURG TIMES

Raller Tiger Tail, decked aut in her beautiful native wedding castume, awaits the arrival af the graam.



ST. PETERSBURG TIMES

Henry Cypress wears a typical wedding castume and silk scarf far a caming festive event.

kind, there have been priests who served as counselors, spiritual advisers, and healers among their people, but modern civilization has many welfare workers, ministers, physicians, psychiatrists, treating the sick and acting as spiritual advisers and counselors to the mentally disturbed. The Indians are turning to these for help.

MORALS AND DIVORCE

By tradition the Seminoles are polygynous, that is, they once approved the custom of plural marriages. This belief probably resulted from the Indian belief that immortality really depends upon the number of descendants he leaves when he dies. They also believed that the ultimate human purpose was to perpetuate the race.

When a woman reaches maturity and wishes to attract a husband, she begins wearing more beads and silver ornaments on her blouse. These ornaments formerly were dollars, half dollars, quarters, or dimes with holes bored through them and strung or fastened to a string.

As the courtship progresses and the couple is ready to wed, they consult with the leader of the clan involved. All the clanspeople sit in conclave to decide whether the choice is a good one, and all must pass on whether the intended husband is acceptable. The father of the girl is likewise consulted. If no one objects, they may then marry.

The women on the groom's side furnish the bedding. Further, the groom supplies blankets, cooking utensils, beads, and money which are turned over to the bride's clan. Her relatives make a new shirt for the husband-to-be. Marriages become official only after the payment of a dowry or "bride's price"; however, this practice is not always followed.

The clan of the groom-elect is consulted and after the couple are married at the Green Corn Dance, they go to live for a period with the bride's people. The mother then teaches her daughter the things she must know to perform her household duties. The couple may then go to live where they choose, although normally they will elect to stay with the mother's clan for many years. If not, they may start a new camp in surroundings that hold more promise of profitable living.

Until recent years practically all marriages among the Florida Seminole were known as "Indian Custom" marriages and were recognized by the federal government and courts as legal. Many present day Seminoles are married by an ordained Indian minister in the church they attend.

When a wife dies, the widower, if he wishes

Morals

KURT SEVERIN

A little Seminole girl.

to remarry, must first look for a new wife among his first wife's clanswomen. The clan of the dead wife has first claim on the marriage choice of the former husband.

The average Seminole is a very honest person, and his promises are almost invariably kept. The polite subterfuges that the white man uses in daily life would be lies to the Indian. Those who wish to win his confidence must first prove worthy.

The deportment of the children is strictly disciplined by tribal standards. Seminoles have a high regard for truth, a quality that has persisted through all their known history. A Seminole parent tells his children to say "yes" or "no," and under no circumstances to deviate from that position.

Other moral standards among the Seminoles are equally high. The girls live close to their mothers until their marriage is arranged by the families.

The children learn to take care of themselves at an early age. Boys soon learn to hunt and to spear fish. They also help their mother sort scraps of clothing, string beads, and perform other light chores. At about the age of twelve years, the Seminole boy becomes a man with all the privileges of an adult in the tribal group. To give a boy a toy after he has reached this age would be considered an insult.

Little girls learn to sew at a very early age. By the time a girl is six, she can sew properly on a hand-operated machine. They make their own dolls and clothes for themselves. The older girls from eight to fourteen act as little mothers to the babies that they carry on their hips. They run and play with their heavy burdens and seem to enjoy it. Offerings of food such as candy to the girls is always shared with the baby.

This little Seminole boy and girl, dressed in their "Sunday best", visit at Glade Cross Mission.

Old Folks

KURT SEVERIN

It was an old rule that when a Seminole Indian died, the family of the deceased would abandon the camp and move elsewhere. This custom has been discontinued by the present-day Seminoles.

In the family it is the husband's responsibility to provide for his wife and children, while an unmarried man looks after and provides for his mother and sisters if they are in need of assistance.

Older people are highly respected. They are usually healthy and strong and keep active by taking care of garden plots and gathering wood for fuel. In the absence of other members of the family, they look after the children and take care of the pigs and chickens around the camp. Most of the Seminoles, because of their stoicism, lack of worry, and belief in the inevitable, live to an old age. It is not uncommon to find old people over one hundred years old.

Divorce seldom occurs among the Seminoles. When it does, the husband leaves the camp of his wife's clan. If the couple have resided in a camp of their own, the wife and children return to her clan camp. Either party may remarry with the approval of the tribal leaders or council men. Almost invariably the reason for divorce is in-

MAX NORRIS

The Craft Guild Center at Brighton Reservation where the Indians bring their handicraft to be sold.

compatibility. Since the Seminoles are extremely moral, leaving a wife for the sake of another is disgraceful and almost unknown.

The attitude of the Seminoles toward women differs radically from that of other North American tribes. Seminole women are not slaves or beasts of burden. Their husbands give them a degree of consideration unknown to most aboriginal peoples.

RUBE ALLYN

Grandmother Mary Jones takes care of her grandson, Mush Jones. The Seminoles still use the age old hammock type cradle

CHILD BIRTH

Before childbirth, a special shelter is improvised, roughly thatched with palmetto fronds on top and sides, facing the camp or village. The floor or ground is covered with a layer of palmetto fronds and blankets. At the time of delivery, the mother grasps a stake which has been driven into the ground for this purpose. She remains in seclusion in this hut for four days after the child's birth. Her food is prepared separately and brought to her in special dishes.

During her confinement, she is considered unclean and only her immediate family may visit her. After the mother returns to her dwelling and assumes her usual duties, her food is still prepared separately and is eaten apart from the rest of the family for four months. Indian midwives care for the mother during birth and the prescribed period of isolation.

Each child, shortly after being born, has a bag filled with herbs tied with a string about its neck. This is supposed to ward off disease and give the baby strength.

Within the last few years, most of the women have been using modern hospital facilities, which is an important factor in the general population increase of the Seminoles in late years.

After a husband dies, a widow remains in a ritually unclean state for an indefinite time; her hair is let down; her beads are removed; and she eats her meals in solitude. At the next Green Corn Dance she is ceremonially re-admitted. A widower strips the old clothes from the recent widow, throws them away, and dresses her in a new costume.

The mourning period for either widow or widower is four months. After this length of time, remarriage can be considered. During this time a woman must change her clothes but wear the same costume continuously.

A medicine man is retained to make medicine for the bereaved person's soul and the soul of the deceased. All through the day funeral chants are sung to comfort the relatives of the departed. At sunset on the three days following the funeral, medicine is sprinkled throughout the camp. Also during this time a smoking campfire is kept to ward off evil spirits.

The mourning period lasts four days, after which time the Seminole belief is that the second soul leaves the body. When the second soul departs, the deceased is considered officially dead. Then the mourning ceases and the bereaved family returns to its usual activities. For four days after the death in the family, all members have to remain at home and refrain from work.

HEALTH

In spite of the fact the Seminoles live in the most dismal swamp region in the United States, they are among the healthiest of all Indian tribes in the nation. This is doubtlessly true because they live outdoors in the open air, living the natural life with plenty of exercise. Each family is isolated from its neighbor. Indians who live in the old manner seem to remain healthiest and live the longest. There are many of surprising longevity among the older Indians.

Schools where the children are crowded together seem responsible for much of the disease which has plagued them in recent years. As the Seminoles come more and more into contact with the outside, they contact many of the white men's diseases. Within the last few years measles, whooping cough, chicken pox, and mumps have been the most prevalent communicable diseases among them. A government nurse gives free medical attention to the Seminoles, including the children.

POPULATION

The peak of the Seminole population in Florida occurred about the year 1820, when the tribe was estimated to number about 5,000. After a great many of the Seminoles had been resettled on Indian reservations and others had been killed in warfare, the population estimates indicated there were about 200 Indians left in Florida by the year 1858.

The census taken in 1900 showed that there were 358. Thirty years later, in 1930, the number had increased to 578, according to the United States Commissioner's report and the Indians' own estimate.

Ten years later there were 590, and by September, 1951, this figure had increased to 823. At this

Tribal Law

Young and old gather under the thatched roofed shelter, near the kitchen or cook house. As their elders discuss local events, the well-mannered Indian children sit quietly waiting for the meal to be served.

time, out of the total population, about 295 are Cow Creek Seminoles, but the larger group are Mikasukis. The Indian population in Florida has increased to over 1,000 at the present time.

Compared to Indian groups in other parts of the country, there has been little intermarriage with the white population. As of September, 1951, about 728 of the total 823 in Florida were full-blooded Seminoles.

CITIZENSHIP, LEGAL STATUS, AND TRIBAL LAW

A federal law passed in 1924 declares all Indians born in the United States to be natural citizens. This includes the Florida Seminoles. They can vote, hold public office, own land and personal property. Since the Seminoles are citizens of Florida, they must obey the state hunting and fishing laws except when on federal preserves. They do not often violate white man's law; when they do transgress, they are generally treated with leniency. Those who break the tribal laws are brought to judgment by the tribal elders at the time of the Green Corn Dance. Death sentences have not been imposed by the Tribal Council in recent years. Previously, capital punishment had been inflicted in severe cases of tribal law infractions, such as the unwarranted killing of one Seminole by another.

WHITE MAN'S LAW VS. TRIBAL LAW

Only in rare instances do Seminole Indians appear in white man's court to settle tribal disputes.

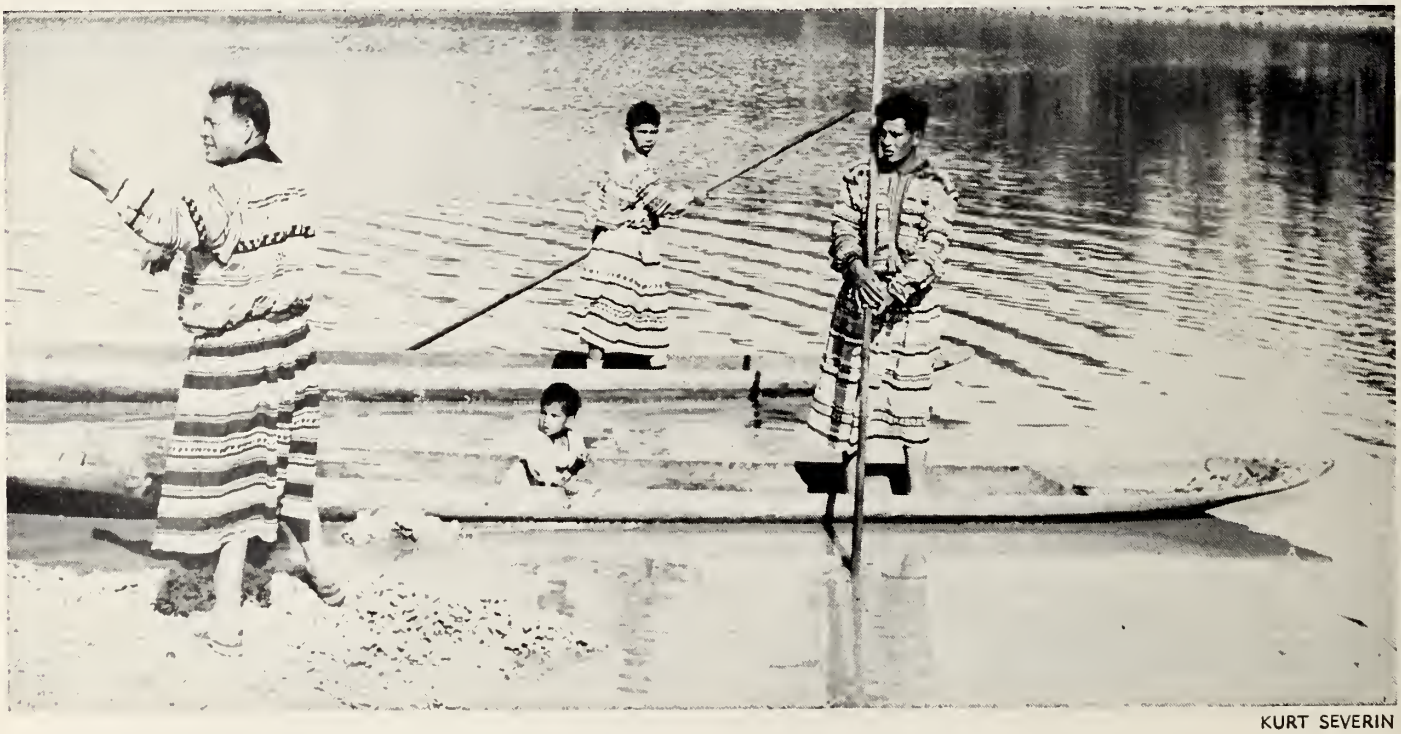
In August, 1955, Joe Billie, an alligator wrestler, appeared in a Florida court seeking custody of his five children after his wife died. Tribal law gave the maternal grandmother custody of the children. An ancient Seminole custom gives children to the mother's side of the family in case the mother dies. In this instance, the grandmother had hidden the children in the Everglades to keep the court from serving a habeas corpus writ for the return of the children to the father.

The Florida court attempted to arraign two Mikasuki council men for aiding the grandmother in gaining custody of the children. In an appeal to the President of the United States, the Seminole

Grass Planters

ST. PETERSBURG TIMES

The Ammon McCellan Company, grass sprigging contractors, Okeechobee, Florida, employ Seminole men and women in their state highway grass planting operations. This group consisting of Happy Jones, Doctor Jones, Oleda Osceola, Faye Tiger, Annie Jones, and Flora Lee Jones are spreading straw over newly set sprigs of grass that will beautify the new highways in Florida.



KURT SEVERIN

These Seminole Indian men, dressed in their traditional costumes, prepare to pole their dugout boats through the swampland. The dugout canoe is slowly being discontinued as a mode of travel in the Everglades of south Florida. Only in rare instances have any of these boats been made in recent years. Modern propellor driven airboats, powered by airplane engines, are used for rapid propulsion through shallow water.

Brighton Transferred

IRVIN M. PEITHMANN

Though the Seminole men are adopting modern means of transportation, Nellie Tommy continues to use her century old dugout canoe as the best mode of travel from her home to her concession stand near the Tamiami Trail. In this almost tropical setting, the Seminoles found travel impossible except by boat. Necessity had forced them to make and use these dugout canoes. They were hewed from the large trunks of cypress trees.

Council claimed the Florida courts had violated international law by bringing charges against the two tribesmen who assisted the grandmother. The Tribal Council further declared that the white man's law is inimical to the Indians' interests and contradicts the United States program of peace. They ask that the United States Government not intrude in tribal affairs.

FLORIDA LAND UNDER STATE CONTROL

In addition to the Federal reservations, there are 109,400 acres of land under the jurisdiction of the Florida State Government. This state-controlled land adjoins the Big Cypress Reservation in southern Florida.

Now the Seminole tribal leaders are petitioning the United States Government for a tract of land in the Everglades to be used as a hunting preserve. They want an area set aside for their own use, an area where the Indians may hunt and fish without being restricted or subjected to white man's law. The Mikasuki general council has asked the Indian Affairs Commissioners for non-exclusive use of 300,000 acres where they may hunt and fish unhampered. The Indians are willing for the whites to hunt in the open season.

Congressman James A. Haley has introduced a bill in Washington which was passed by the House of Representatives and has been sent to the Senate, giving the Brighton Reservation Seminole title to 27,000 acres. Under the Haley Bill*, the land known as the Brighton Reservation in Glades County will be transferred from the Agriculture Department to the Interior Department and held in trust for the Seminoles. The submarginal lands concerned, northwest of Lake Okeechobee, have been used by the Indians since 1933 for development of a livestock enterprise. Transfer of the title to the Cow Creek Seminoles will guarantee them a permanent base for continued operations and improvement of the cattle raising project. Transfer of the land title under the Haley bill will fulfill an implied commitment to the Indians at the time the property was purchased by the Federal Government over twenty years ago. As soon as the bill is passed, title will be transferred to them. The Indians have to date spent $73,000 of their own funds in developing the tract.

CONCLUSION

The past history of the Seminoles proves again that the Indians had little to say concerning their fate. They were rounded up and sent to reservations which were in fact, little more than large concentration camps. Moreover, they disliked the idea of being sent against their will to places which were not familiar to them. The Seminoles trod the same "trail of tears" as many other Indians on their forced emigration to western reservations, to make way for a new civilization.

This uprooting of whole Indian nations by a civilized nation and removing them from their native environment without proper transportation and clothing brought untold hardship, disease, and death.

They did not want to give up their rightful birthright—their land—old tribal customs and traditions. Those who stayed became outcasts and those who were sent away became exiles.

Like most wars in history, the conflict between the Indians and white men was caused by broken treaties, unkept promises, and trespassing on the Indian hunting grounds.

For over a hundred years the Indians have been a forgotten people. During the last quarter of a century, the United States Government has spent millions of dollars for foreign aid, but little in comparison has been spent to aid the Indians.

We have shared the spoils of America with all races of the world but not with the rightful owners, the American Indians.

END

President Eisenhower has signed the Haley bill which gives the Seminoles title to this tract of land they have been improving.

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SMOKE FROM OLD ALTARS

The prosaic are conscious of flame-clad trees
And the riot of gorgeous-canopied Fall,
But the flash of color the poet sees
Is a feathered head-dress, or vivid shawl
Of an Indian Princess who keeps a tryst
In one of the tepees, half concealed
By Autumn's haze, that the wise insist
Are but shocks of corn in a farmer's field . .
The literal-minded tread leafy mold—
The dreamer, the ash of fires long-cold.

Dana Kneeland Akers

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